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COMMUNITY OF INTERESTS?

MR. LANGE, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, has evidently returned from his exploratory visit to Washington a disappointed man. To some extent he has a legitimate grievance. Before the Presidential election the Republicans had indicated that, in office, their policy would be to enlarge the American team in the Two World line-up by securing the adhesion of countries outside the membership of the Brussels Pact. The Democrats seem to have wanted to show that they could pursue this policy with as much success as the Republicans. Hence the blunt announcement by the State Department last month that the supply of American arms would be reserved for full signatories of the Atlantic Pact. The effect, and probably the intention, of this announcement was to prise Norway away from the strictly regional Nordic mutual assistance pact which the other two Scandinavian countries favoured. Mr. Lange was encouraged to hope that, having parted company with his "neutral" neighbours, he might secure in Washington precise assurances of American assistance. If he failed to realise how strictly the American Constitution precludes any automatic commitment to wage war without the sanction of Congress, his oversight seems to have been shared by the delegates of the Brussels Powers, who have been busily writing into the draft Atlantic Pact binding military clauses—only to discover that the promise of automatic "action" of any nature is more than the Constitution will be held to permit.

It is, of course, arguable that, so long as U.S. forces are stationed in Western Europe, the United States would automatically be involved in war if Moscow gave orders that the Red Army should march Westward. But what, it will be asked, would be the situation if and when U.S. forces are withdrawn from Germany? The French at least are unlikely to forget that after the first world war America could not promise to support France in case of renewed German aggression; they will note, too, that, even in relation to Latin America—the Monroe Doctrine area—the decision whether or not aggression is to invoke military action by the United States is still reserved specifically for Congress. Moreover, if it be a question of securing the territorial and political integrity of Western Europe, it is obvious that the real danger lies, not in an entirely hypothetical military invasion by the U.S.S.R., but in a series of internal Communist-led putsches. For these, Russian responsibility might be alleged, but the facts might be doubtful enough to lead to protracted Congressional debate before a decision was reached whether or not "aggression" had taken place. In these circumstances it would not be surprising if Norway now had second thoughts, and decided that, after all, her security might have a better chance of being preserved by a local mutual assistance agreement with Denmark and Sweden. Such an agreement the U.S.S.R. could scarcely regard as provocative; it would be compatible with the conclusion of the non-aggression pact offered by the Soviet Union; and it would not preclude the acceptance of American help if Norway were invaded.

We suspect, indeed, that if Mr. Lange returned from Washington with a considerable load of worry in his valise, it was not solely because of his inability to secure from the State Department a pledge of immediate and automatic assistance in the event of Norway being attacked. Senator Vandenberg has declared that the Atlantic Pact will offer an "infinite assurance" against a third world war if it merely emphasises "the community of interests" between the United States and European nations. It is pertinent to inquire, as Mr. Lange no doubt did inquire, how the U.S. interprets this community of interests. If he took soundings in the Defence Departments in Washington, he was in all probability informed that the conception of Norway held by American strategic planners is not that it should, or could, be a terrain for land operations against the Red Army, but that Norway's defence plan, concerted with the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington and supported by the provision of American arms and material, should be to build bases for B.50 bombers which could be held long enough to enable them to be used by the U.S. Air Force in delivering what (it is hoped) would be a knock-out atomic blow to the cities of Western Russia.

We are far from suggesting that, militarily speaking, this is incorrect strategy. It may be the best plan, from the American standpoint, for waging the third world war; and it may be that the Norwegian people, in such an event, would suffer less by making no attempt to defend their country as a whole, and confining military resistance to holding operations covering air bases designed for American use. Nevertheless, the question emerges sharply which interest—American or European—would predominate in the Atlantic Pact. Senator Vandenberg's "community of interests" is by no means inevitable or obvious. A strong, independent Western Europe, capable (after initial Marshall Aid) of defending itself physically and morally against the disintegrating effects of Communist infiltration, is one thing; the conversion of Western Europe into an advance post—expendable save for selected air bases—from which U.S. forces can attack the U.S.S.R., is quite another. Not only Norway but other countries will have to weigh the prospects carefully before deciding that their ultimate security is promoted by extending across the Atlantic pacts whose defensive character diminishes proportionately with their departure from strict regionalism.

U.S. Policy and Japan

Washington denials notwithstanding, it seems clear that a special conference of American newspaper correspondents in Tokio was told by Mr. Kenneth Royall, U.S. Secretary of the Army, or his spokesman, that the value of Japan in the case of war with Russia was questionable; that a strategic air attack on the U.S.S.R. could be mounted more effectively from Okinawa, the Aleutian Islands and the Philippines rather than from Japan, the feeding of whose civil population would be an embarrassment; and that, though the U.S. could still "shove dollars" into Japan to

support Japanese anti-Communists, the protection of the Japanese was in no sense a moral obligation of the United States. There is no reason to suppose that this statement foreshadows any immediate change in U.S. policy in the Pacific. If these sentiments are rightly credited to Mr. Royall, they may well reflect the known Army Department view that the focal point in American strategic planning is Europe rather than the Far East. It is equally conceivable that Mr. Royall, for personal reasons, was not averse ffom reminding General MacArthur that his "personal empire" in Japan depends on Washington's confirmation. (The General's demand for reinforcements has been refused.) He may have chosen this way of reminding Australia and New Zealand—not to mention the "reliable" elements in Japan itself—that they must not count unconditionally on American willingness to shoulder the whole burden of keeping the Pacific "safe for democracy." Taken, however, in conjunction with what is surmised to be the general lines of American strategic planning, this "thinking aloud" by the Secretary of the Army confirms the view that the U.S. Chiefs of Staff (now reinforced by General Eisenhower as chairman) are tending increasingly to take the line that, in the event of war with the U.S.S.R., countries within reach of the Soviet Union cannot be defended by American forces, whose role will be to stage a long-range counter-offensive from air bases whose attractiveness to U.S. planners is the greater the less the number of mouths there are to be fed in them.

Realism in Viet-Nam

Whatever intentions the State Department may have in relation to Japan, it is likely to be disappointed in its efforts to back French attempts to keep Viet-Nam safe from Communism by enlisting the services of the wandering ex-Emperor Bao-Dai. The Americans doubtless have their eyes on the strategic base of Camranh Bay, but Bao-Dai has watched the failure of one French puppet after another, the latest being General Xuan, the President of the French-created "Provisional Central Government of Viet-Nam", who has recently returned empty-handed to the tag-ends of his Cabinet. Above all, Bao-Dai knows, even if the French have yet to discover, that no arrangement could have any value unless it had the guarantee of President Ho Chi-Minh's support. The same applies to any agreement which the French might try to trade with the United States and with Great Britain, both of whose Commanders-in-Chief of Far East Forces have recently visited Indo-China. And so this costly imperialist war continues. Vietnamese guerilla warfare increases; President Ho Chi-Minh's Government gains in strength and experience; and the Communists consolidate their control, encouraged by their Chinese comrades with whom they will share a frontier of 400 miles. If the United States and Great Britain wish to maintain any friendly relations with Indo-China, their only course is to encourage the French to open negotiations with Ho Chi-Minh. This policy is already winning increasing, if belated, support among French Socialists.

North v. South

Mr. Attlee's remark in the House of Commons that the elections in Northern Ireland were not conducted "on quite the same lines as ours here" is vividly confirmed by an article from a North of Ireland correspondent which we publish this week. The charges of jerrymandering, rowdyism and other "irregularities," are substantiated. But the Eire Government will not convince anyone that such irregularities noticeably affected the election results. Most of the Protestants in Northern Ireland, including many who otherwise would have voted Labour, have supported Sir Basil Brooke as a result of the Costello Government's Republican declaration, followed up by its offer to aid Nationalist candidates in the Six Counties. The second Eire Government statement, which declares that the Twenty-six Counties cannot join the Atlantic Pact as long as partition remains, is more serious. There is a considerable body of opinion in Eire which will never be satisfied and never cease to hate Britain until its demand for a United Ireland is satisfied. As long as partition remains, there will be, from the British point of view, a permanent, even if small, "fifth column" in Ireland. Two foreign policies are open to the Republican Government. The first is to admit the need of a home defence plan for the whole of Ireland, and to attempt, as a result of defence discussions, to move towards a United Ireland; the alternative is to maintain De Valera's policy of neutrality, possibly even to seek association with a Scandinavian bloc. The increased bitterness created by events before and during the North of Ireland elections seems to have settled the matter, for the present, in favour of non-co-operation.

The Rebellion in Burma

The Karen revolt (Mr. Woodrow Wyatt cables from Rangoon) appears at the moment to be petering out. The rebels are still holding out at Insein, but are virtually surrounded; and the danger that they might be reinforced by two dissident battalions of Karen regulars has been dispelled by the defeat of these forces by Government troops. There are signs of division among the Karens themselves. The Karens as a whole are not behind the rebellion, and their accredited leaders were against an armed rising at this stage. The rebellion was, in fact, the result of precipitate action by young leaders of a militant section of Karens. The Government would be well advised to publish forthwith an interim report of the proceedings of the Regional Autonomy Commission and to act on its recommendations. It is true that the three representatives on the Commission of the Karen National Union are not available at present to append their signatures; but it is common knowledge that they agreed with the rest of the Commission that the Karen State should comprise the Salween areas and parts of the districts of Tounggoo, Thaton, and Moulmein, where there is a Karen majority. If the Government were to announce promptly that a Karen State, within the Union, could come into being at once, even before the conclusion of present hostilities, the Karen extremists would be isolated. The delay in taking this step is due to the fact that the Government has been painstakingly considering all Karen claims, however absurd, while the Karens themselves were previously not prepared to accept an offer on these lines. It is believed, however, that, just before the revolt began, the Karens' leaders were on the verge of accepting this solution.

Additional Expenses

The supplementary civil estimates, published last week, caused a Tory storm in a tea-cup. They amount to some £221 million, thus reducing the budgeted surplus to £330 million before the supplementary demands of the Services —which are certain to be very considerable—have been met. In spite of the sharp rise in expenditure, however, Sir Stafford Cripps may still have a cash surplus, perhaps somewhat larger than he had hoped, to present as the Treasury's contribution to disinflation. He may save on items not charged against current revenue; and revenue itself has come in well this financial year, thanks in part to the proceeds of the unearned-income levy, which has proved more workable and profitable than seemed possible when it was introduced. The biggest share of the new estimates is taken by the Ministries of Food and Health, which are to get £52 million and £58 million respectively. The food cost arises primarily from the Ministry's trading services and had already been foreseen by Sir Stafford, who put the revised cost of subsidies at £484 million for the whole year. It is the expense of the Health Service which has produced the largest excess over the original Budget. Undoubtedly, Mr. Bevan's experts erred badly in putting ophthalmic costs at £2 million when, in fact, they are now over £13 million. Similarly, expenditure on dental services is £11 million above the anticipated cost of £7 million. But it is a mistake to regard this expenditure as prodigal. Proper surveys did exist and were not adequately considered—in optical requirements, for instance—but other estimates could only be guess-work. The heavy cost is probably non-recurring in great part, and is in any case a measure of the real need that had been pent up for years. The increased advances to hospital boards, too, reflect a more rapid development than was originally planned. Certainly, there is a case for careful scrutiny of the estimates in these spheres at the next Budget. But there is nothing in these supplementary estimates to justify charges of Government extravagance, even if the fresh demands on the Treasury may provide the Chancellor with arguments against substantial tax-relief in April.

The Real Profligacy

Much more concern will be caused by the swollen estimates of next year's Defence expenditure. At £760 millions, the bill, excluding war terminal charges, is £107 millions higher than the 1948-9 Budget estimate. Apart from the question whether value is being obtained for this colossal expenditure (have we in fact got three operational divisions?), the programme represents a disquieting diversion of man-power to unproductive purposes. In April, 1950, it is contemplated, there will still be 750,000 uniformed personnel in the Services; and, in addition, there will be 700,000 civilians next year either working directly or employed indirectly for the Services on armaments production. That is, the total numbers engaged in preparing for a hypothetical war will amount to more than double the total man-power available for the coal industry. We do not believe that this country can permanently support such a burden; it makes nonsense of the assumptions underlying Britain's Four-Year Plan, and it threatens to prejudice gravely the fulfilment of an adequate programme of civil building—houses, schools and hospitals—and of industrial re-equipment. It destroys the first line of defence—our capacity to become self-supporting. The forces of sanity in the Cabinet, in whose support (it had been hoped) Sir Stafford Cripps would have the courage of his convictions, have suffered a heavy defeat.

Man-power for Industry

In the civilian sector of the nation's economy, the man-power figures for last year, issued this week, are notable for the high number of women remaining in employment—at least 200,000 above the estimate made early in the year. This high total is due partly to the success of schemes of part-time employment, but it also reflects a growing tendency for married women to stay on in full-time jobs, or to return to them. In other respects, industry by industry, the figures are less satisfactory. Coal, textiles and agriculture—the three vital industries that are most short of workers—have all failed by a long way to hit their man-power targets, whereas building and civil engineering have absorbed much more labour than the estimates allowed for. Distribution has also taken a bigger slice of the available labour than was expected, but is still a long way short of its pre-war labour force. Unemployment has been less than was anticipated, despite a larger total supply of man-power. The success of the export drive kept unemployment below the estimates; and the relaxation of controls on building caused a considerable absorption of labour in that field. Coal and agriculture obviously remain the chief unsolved problems of labour recruitment, with

cotton not far behind. A further factor worth noting is that every year the average age of those in employment is rising, and industries are having to adapt themselves to a diminished inflow of juvenile workers.

No More Premiums

The Government has sensibly agreed to meet some of the criticisms of the Landlord and Tenant Bill. Apart from accepting the Tory request that landlords as well as tenants should be permitted to apply to tribunals to have a "reasonable" rent determined, Mr. Bevan took the Communist proposal to make the Bill retrospective to 1939. Another amendment, tabled by Mr. Bevan last week, prohibits the charging of any premium at all for leased premises—a step which should have been taken three years ago when this racket was at its height. To-day, the market has begun to slip and neither houses for sale nor leases can command the inflated prices they fetched in the past. While the new clauses do not touch the difficult problem of helping tenants to recover excessive payments for leases secured on assignment, rather than from landlords, provision is now made for orderly regulation of the premiums in the exceptions which are still admitted. Thus, a tenant who has legally paid a premium prior to the passage of this Bill may pass on a proper proportion of the premium to his successor—the percentage of the original premium represented by the number of years remaining of the lease—and charge him for the cost of legitimate improvements or fittings. Such exceptions apart, premiums are to go, quite rightly. One question, however, is still unclear. Are the tribunals which will fix the "reasonable" rent for first-lettings to base their decision on prevailing rents or upon the costs incurred in construction? Obviously, the Minister must issue a directive which will prevent serious discrepancies, which are otherwise likely to arise, in the application of this rule.

Many Cooks : More Broth ?

On both sides of the Atlantic there has been great activity this week in the field of international economic co-operation. In Washington Mr. Truman, Mr. Acheson, Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Harriman have all been expressing strong satisfaction with the first year's working of Marshall Aid and have been urging Congress to meet in full the claims put forward for the coming year. In Paris, the special committee of O.E.E.C. has been considering how best to set about the difficult task of unifying the separate recovery plans of the recipient countries into something more like a concerted plan cleared of the inconsistent estimates and ambitions of the various countries and involving greater provision both for exchanges within Western Europe and for trade with non-dollar areas outside the participating countries. In Geneva, the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe has been putting forward further proposals for the expansion of East-West trade. In Washington again, there has been much coming and going in the attempt to amend last year's Wheat Agreement so as to secure the adhesion of all the chief exporting and importing areas. In Buenos Aires, Argentinian trade policy, under pressure of exchange difficulties, seems to be taking a less intransigent line. In London and at the Hague British-Dutch talks are in progress over Indonesian trade, as well as over the direct trade between this country and the Netherlands. Never before can so many agencies have been simultaneously at work planning for international economic co-operation. And yet . . . there is still a very long way to go before any sort of pattern of real international planning can be expected to emerge. Even in O.E.E.C., the lack of really effective national controls outside this country means that the necessary instruments for translating agreed paper programmes into realities are sadly lacking.

PARLIAMENT : Special Interests

Wednesday

Before Sparks moved the Hairdressers (Registration) Bill, not many Members had fully realised the danger of going to the barber. By the time he had finished, few felt quite sure that during their last hair-cut they hadn't caught some pustular or herpiform disease at the hands of an unregisterable hairdresser. After Leslie had warned against "foul shaves," and John Paton against "horrible disfigurements," terrified Members scratched themselves surreptitiously, and accepted the Bill without division.

All this happened last Friday, when an unnaturally crowded House heard the first Private Bills debated in this Parliament. A Private Bill is in a most favourable sense the product of a "special interest." No one, therefore, took it amiss that, seen from behind, there were speakers whose clean-shaven necks announced their connection with the hairdressing profession, or that seen from below, the gallery-spectators, with their orderly coiffures, showed that the profession had come to watch its champions. Under this scrutiny, and without their Whips to guide them, un-lobbied Members who had no personal concern with barber-shops (except as potential acquirers of barber's rash or psoriasis) felt a heavy and judicial responsibility. The younger ones cupped their ears to listen; the older and more energetic read the Bills.

The rococo language of the Hairdressers' Bill was less to the taste of the House than its intention. Baxter wanted words like *mortmain* to be discarded; but when he referred to what he thought was the Bill's pretentious clause about "infamous or disgraceful conduct in a professional respect," some Members, at least, thought it not excessive to retain sanctions against the registered yet whimsical hairdresser who has the power to leave you with half a moustache, or dye your hair green, or provide you with an unsolicited tonsure.

Piratin, introducing his Bill on Employer's Liability, was as restrained in his expression as the Bill was moderate in its contents. Both Maxwell Fyfe and the Minister of Labour congratulated him; and the Government could do no less to disarm the Bill's wide-ranging supporters than to promise them an even better Bill. Despite the prejudice which might have been expected against a Bill initiated by a Communist, the House in general observed its tradition of treating a Private Member's Bill entirely on its merits.

Somewhat infelicitously, Moyle, the Prime Minister's much-liked but infrequently heard P.P.S., contrasted the method of Moscow, as expressed, in his view, in Clause 2, with the method of Westminster. While Members accept shouts of "Moscow" or "Franco" as part of the general abuse in debate, they were not inclined, on this occasion, to encourage an emotionally prejudicial analogy. Silverman turned a hose-pipe of interruptions on to Moyle; and, had the Attorney-General not intervened and taken him by the hand, Moyle's wetting might have been greater than it was.

The Government's part, during a Private Member's Bill, is to act as a monitor. Both Isaacs and Younger, in stating their disagreements with certain aspects of Friday's Bills, used the cautious terms of enlightened parents warning wayward children—"If I may *suggest*," "It might *perhaps* be better," "If *I* were dealing with the matter," and so on. But the Private Members decided that they knew best; in the last three minutes of the day, they gave Second Readings to the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill of Manningham-Buller, and Mellor's Statutory Instruments Bill.

Now the Bills move on to the Committee Stage for cosmetic treatment. The chief interest remains in the Hairdressers Bill, which everyone hopes will emerge, slimmed, massaged, clipped and appropriately groomed.

Maurice Edelman

OUR GERMAN COMPETITORS

The wheels of West German industry have begun to turn again; and one by one, with automatic egotism, British manufacturers are protesting against German competition. First it was the scientific instrument manufacturers; then the watchmakers; after that the motor-car magnates. Almost every week the Board of Trade has another indignant delegation on the doorstep.

These protests are illogical. Since the war, British manufacturers have enjoyed a sellers' market in which their foremost competitor in the past (and prospectively again in the future) has had no part. Their contentment enlarged by high immediate profits, they have sat smugly by, applauding, while their diplomatic allies in the Foreign Office and the State Department made sure that Mr. Bevin's great promises of social change in Germany should be brought to nothing; while the low level of production in Western Germany was officially bewailed and laid at Russia's door; while the foundations of German capitalism were defended against "Bolshevism," and the structure of monopolist "free enterprise" raised up once more upon these foundations. Now, like the sorcerer's apprentice, they shriek for help when it is too late. The devils of capitalist competition in Western Germany were dead, and now are alive again.

The Labour movement can have no part in these protests. To say that there is something wrong with German competition—simply because it is German and therefore "unfair"—is as wrong-headed as it is reactionary. The day when the German workers no longer want to make their factories produce goods for sale abroad will be a sad one for the whole of Europe. On the contrary, that they should so want is a welcome sign of German regeneration—the revival of a will to live which can only benefit the common European good. Yet there is one aspect of German competition which deserves the closest attention of the Labour movement here. Under what social conditions are these competitive German exports now being produced?

The simple answer is that the goods are being produced under straightforward capitalist conditions—as determined by the Western occupying Powers. This means, if the past is any guide, that German manufacturers who have lost their standing in foreign markets will fight by any means, "fair" or foul, to get it back. In a capitalist society, after all, where the devil takes the hindmost, what else can German manufacturers do? By hook or by crook, German exports have got to cost less than British exports: otherwise the goods will stay unsold, and the Germans will starve. So "efficient private enterprise" is reducing costs in the Western Zones. Money wages, since the currency reform of last June, have stayed more or less where they were; domestic prices have risen by more than two-thirds. If the level of productivity has gone up, so has unemployment—to the point where West German employers have a tidy reserve of nearly a million unemployed to use in bargaining with the unions. The employers have gained all along the line—taxes on production, for instance, are less than half as high as six months ago—and many export goods are offered at prices which undercut the British.

Thus we find the motor-car manufacturers complaining that Opel and Ford (both American subsidiaries) are selling cars at prices based on wage levels which are sometimes no more than half of those in the British industry. "Within the last few weeks," wrote the President of the British Scientific Instrument Manufacturers in the October bulletin issued by that Association, "the Indian Government here in London have submitted a tender for 400 microscopes . . . Leitz of Germany received the order at approximately £10,000 below the *lowest* British price." And he goes on to say: "Great Britain cannot

possibly compete with Germany whilst there is such great disparity between the rates of pay in the respective countries."

But what in heaven's name was expected? That the German manufacturers, re-established by Military Government in their positions of command, supported by enormous sums in dollar relief, and challenged by every form of written and spoken propaganda (and by their own need to survive) to make "free enterprise" work, should rest content with any casual crumbs the British might graciously care to let fall from their well-stocked order books? It is idle for Mr. Harold Wilson to argue, as he did last week, that at the present conversion rate of 30 cents to one Deutschemark, German prices (when pre-currency-reform contracts have been worked off) will in some cases be less competitive. It is futile to declare that "British policy" will be to prevent a revival of the old Schachtian methods of dumping and manipulation of markets. The plain fact is that cut-throat competition, incompatible with British interests, is inherent in the conception of capitalist recovery in Germany. Only a Socialist economy in Europe can hope to expand purchasing-power to the point where markets can absorb *all* the goods which modern technique can devise, make, and distribute. But a capitalist Western Germany is incompatible with a Socialist Europe.

The choice between German recovery under capitalist or Socialist conditions was widely recognised at the end of the war. Both the election pledges of the Labour party and many later declarations by Mr. Bevin suggested that conditions in the British Zone (industrially the most important of all the Zones) would—at least in some important ways—become Socialist. The Foreign Office and Military Government have between them chosen otherwise—until we reach the final point at which General Sir Brian Robertson, the British Commander-in-Chief, can declare (as he did some weeks ago) that the British intend to restore the German economy "subject only to restrictions for purely military reasons." This is the same as saying that we fought, endured, and won the war only to re-establish the *status quo* without benefit of social, moral, or economic change. Who would have dared to say such a thing in 1945?

Mr. Bevin bears a heavy responsibility for this. Despite all his statements to the contrary, he has done nothing to socialise heavy industries in the British Zone, nothing to ensure that the trade unions shall have a real say in management and working conditions, nothing to prevent the employers from running things in any way that suits them best. Nor are all the consequences by any means yet manifest. What is to happen when German competition based on low wages really does begin to eat into the British export market? Can British wages then maintain their present levels? This choice in Western Germany between restoring capitalism and introducing Socialism is not just another dreary argument of doctrine divorced from reality. It is a matter of intimate daily interest to all engaged here in making goods for the export market—ultimately, perhaps, to every man and woman in this country. To go on as we are—or, rather, to let things go on as they are—means, not only that we shall be instrumental in allowing the extremities of German nationalism to fasten and grow strong upon the ambitions of the employers and the discontents of the workers, it means that the British will have to enter upon a race for markets likely to prove every bit as ruthless and exhausting as it did after the first war.

And let us be clear about another thing. From cut-throat trade competition it is a short step to political hostility. A Socialist Germany, within the framework of a Socialist Europe, might in time become an ally and a friend. As things are moving now, we have chosen to make Germany our enemy, even though we may disguise her for the moment as our ally.

"RIGHT OVER DOLLY'S BRAE"

(By a Special Correspondent)

"WHAT are the odds on blood flowing?" asked a visiting journalist rather hopefully. Like the proverbial eagles, a swarm of special correspondents, including an American contingent, descended on Belfast last week to observe the hastily called Northern Ireland general election (on a three-year-old register) and to look for features specifically "Irish." They did not all see blood flowing, perhaps, but they watched contests which were, in Attlee's phrase, "rowdier" than those in Britain. Electorally the chief sufferers were in Belfast, where three Labour candidates lost their seats, and where some Labour tally-rooms had to be abandoned in the face of Unionist hostility. Here the victories, which increased Unionist strength to 36 in a House of 52, were greeted by the singing of the Orange song, *Dolly's Brae*, with its refrain: "And the song we sang was Kick the Pope Right over Dolly's Brae."

In 1945, the general election, especially in Belfast, was comparatively quiet. Not so in 1949. Labour candidates (Nationalists have given up contests in Belfast) met with a rough reception, notably in Pottinger where Beattie, Independent Labour, had won his seat with a majority of merely 478 in 1945. At some meetings Unionist supporters made it impossible for Opposition candidates to speak by shouting, singing Orange songs and beating Lambeg drums. These drums are enormous affairs, carried so that the bearer's body supports the wooden frame. The drummer beats the sides with thin canes to produce a continuous, monotonous, deafening sound not unlike the rumble of a heavy tank over cobbles. The effect is reinforced by the possessed look on the drummer's face and by the blood which begins to pour from his knuckles—"if he's ony guid of a drummer." The scene is African, not European, especially when the drumming party's supporters begin to respond to the stimulus.

But Opposition candidates have had more than noise to contend with. First Labour and, later on, Nationalist speakers were greeted by missiles that included stones and oranges. One Independent Labour candidate had his car window smashed, while Arthur Johnson, British-appointed organiser of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, received a black eye from one stone-weighted orange and retrieved another with a razor blade neatly embedded. Members of the general public waiting for election meetings were threatened with duckings and house-burnings. In short, Northern Ireland has reverted to the atmosphere of the 1920's and 1930's, for of recent years it has not been customary to attend the meetings of one's political opponents, and elections have as a result been calmer. Since 1938 it has been absence of support rather than threats of violence that has shown a candidate he was disliked by any section. But now the Orange arches have been up in the streets; Unionists have chalked "By hook or by crook, Elect Brooke"; the dossiers of Socialist students have been rummaged over by plain-clothes men; and for days the Conservative-Unionist papers have urged citizens not to vote themselves into Eire with its trade deficit—by implication denying Britain's trade deficit. The atmosphere has been so charged with tension that it has been impossible to relax—even when the Minister of Education in full hunting kit, rode a white horse through his Belfast constituency.

The Unionist case is that the population of the province has been so infuriated by the Republic of Ireland Act and by the Eire collections at church and chapel door that it cannot be blamed for its behaviour. Mr. Warnock, Minister of Home Affairs, issued a statement that no one had been injured during any incidents, just after Sir Ronald Ross (U.), assured the Westminster House of Commons that injuries had indeed been sustained. It was true that demonstrators seemed to be more interested in intimidating than in injuring their opponents. But as the Unionist press showed very little displeasure at the situation, and the same disrupters were met with at different meetings, onlookers have concluded that, at some level or other, there was a conscious desire to make use of recent events to ensure a sweeping Unionist victory. And it is at least possible that this victory was desired not so much because of the menace of an Irish Republic as the menace of a successful Socialist Britain.

There were certainly some counter-demonstrations by Nationalists in outlying districts, but these were of minor importance. In Belfast, where all Opposition candidates were Labour, Independent Labour or, in one case, Communist, it was Unionist demonstrators, often led by hard-faced men and women of the knitting-beside-the-guillotine type, who tried to break up meetings of Labour speakers. They, in fact, made anti-partition speeches; but as Mrs. Irene Calvert, standing for re-election as an Independent for the Queen's University, delicately indicated in her election address, anyone who does not actually belong to the Unionist Association is regarded by its members as beyond the pale.

Britain should ponder the whole conduct of elections in an area where, in the words of the Vice-chancellor of the Queen's University, "Opposition parties are stifled at birth." It is probably impossible, as society is organised in Northern Ireland at the moment, to keep employers from influencing the politics of their employees, or even to lessen by very much the number of people who lose their jobs after every election because they canvassed for the "wrong" candidate. But surely *general* intimidation and, in addition, personation, should cease; surely it is the task of the British Government, which set up the Six-County State, to stop them.

Personation began with the Nationalists, as a protest against gerrymandering, which still exists. It is now used by all parties, particularly by the two well-established ones, Unionist and Nationalist. For a week before polling day, little piles of identity cards are built up by enthusiastic or well-paid canvassers. In this last election, however, intimidation, rather than personation, was responsible for giving a false picture of Tory strength. Threats of violence may prevent an elector from attending the meetings of a candidate. Even worse, they may prevent his voting. In some Catholic ghettos, the inhabitants must go out into schools in hostile streets to vote—if they dare. Timidity and a sense of insecurity frustrate the intellectual and the working-class elector, who are both well aware that they should be playing an active part in fighting Conservatism.

Obviously the responsibility for bringing fresh, fundamental issues before the Irish rests with their own Labour movement. The two separate Socialist parties now existing have been unable to persuade any large body of workers to think in positive terms. It is time, therefore, for a new all-Irish Labour Party to plan a future for Ireland. To clear the air at present, it should see (*a*) that the promised new social services scheme in Eire is brought into being, so that the Northern worker will cease to feel so contemptuous of his Southern colleague, and (*b*) that the Northerner himself is at last made aware that wages in organised industries, and employment figures generally, are better in the South than they are in the entirely Conservative North.

No doubt the new Irish Labour Press that is mooted will do much to create better understanding between Northern and Southern workers, and show them that their so-called religious disputes are vestiges of bygone political and

economic feuds. Nevertheless, the British Government cannot ignore the dangers in the present position. In the interests of justice it should see that the next general election for Westminster is properly conducted in Northern Ireland. In its own interest, particularly in the interest of defence, it should not make a civil war more possible by tacitly supporting a Conservative Government which is frankly sectarian. (Sir Basil Brooke, the Prime Minister, repeated recently his earlier statement that most Catholics were "disloyal.")

Some British Ministers have half-believed pundits like Mr. Warnock, who declared himself "Socialist in the English sense." They should note that this last election campaign has been directed against Labour, not Nationalist, candidates; that a British Labour organiser was assaulted by Unionists and told to go home ("No Englishmen here"); and that Mr. Warnock himself, speaking at a final rally with Sir Basil Brooke, urged electors to send back a message of victory at the polls—to Mr. Churchill. Paradoxically, Unionists here do not care for English people, as such; their daily prayer is for the downfall of the Socialist Government in England. The British Labour movement will do well to remember this.

A LONDON DIARY

WHAT, I wonder, would an intelligent foreign observer of British politics make of the Baldwin incident? That the son of Stanley Baldwin should become a Socialist is intelligible enough; that he should be made Governor of the Leeward Islands by a Socialist Government is not surprising. But how does it happen that this belted Earl should arrive home unexpectedly on a tramp steamer, wearing a battered hat and a dirty raincoat; that he should announce his arrival by abusing our Socialist Colonial Secretary, and declaring that his recall would lead to revolution in the Islands which he governs? Why, when Earl Baldwin began to annoy the planters in the Leeward Islands by treating the Natives as human beings, asking them to a party at Government House (is Lord Mountbatten the only British Pro-Consul allowed this luxury?), by complaining in round and fully justified terms about their conditions and past bad treatment—why was he not at once backed up by a Socialist Government and commended for his determination to act in the spirit of Labour's many declarations on Colonial policy? If the foreigner who makes these enquiries is informed that Earl Baldwin has annoyed the Navy by his informality and incurred displeasure by eccentric disregard for convention, would he not still wonder whether such charges would have been taken seriously if Earl Baldwin's general policy had been such as to please the planters?

* * *

There are few places more dispiriting than the dreary halls in which some of our hospitals accommodate their out-patients. A railway waiting room seems luxurious by contrast. Any morning of the week you can see rows of people huddled on the hard benches, some trying to read, others keeping their children quiet or exchanging symptoms with a neighbour. The atmosphere is almost religious. Even the chatter is hushed as if, in the sanctum beyond the nurse in the glass cubicle at the end, there presided an irascible high priest, not an overworked specialist. What a symbol of poverty these rooms have been! The charity patient was poor and was made to feel it. Armed with a guinea and a doctor's letter one could by-pass the queue and still get the specialist at a cut rate. But without the guinea, there was nothing to do save wait, pathetically childlike. I am glad that Aneurin Bevan has asked hospitals to improve their facilities and to work out proper appointments. Of course, many hospitals are old and dingy and the schedule of specialists is so crowded that some waiting is unavoidable. But there is no need for a visit to the hospital to be so painful and so wearisome. I have in front of me a typical letter from a correspondent who says that in future she will pay for private treatment rather than put up with such a prolonged dose of sanitary charity and humiliating tedium. The poor have always had to endure this waiting. Now we must all take our turn if we profit by the Health Service. The Service will be more popular if a little common sense and consideration in accommodation and the staggering of times makes our turn come more quickly.

* * *

How much time is wasted, too, in the routine visits a patient must pay to his doctor to secure a renewal of a prescription? The doctors rightly complain that a large part of their surgery time is eaten up by a succession of patients calling for the chits that entitle them to free alkalis, cough mixtures, tonics, even laxatives and aspirins. I find it equally inconvenient to bother my doctor every week for a prescription I have been taking for several months. Ought I to ask him for a series, post-dated, or to issue me with half a dozen bottles at once? I can't agree with a friend who suggests that common medicines, such as aspirins and stomach powders, should be made available free on application at any chemists. After all, one of the great blessings of the Health Service is that it makes self-medication—a dangerous by-product of poverty—quite unnecessary. But how can the doctor ease this load of routine? Set one evening aside purely for repeat orders? Provide multiple prescriptions for patients with long-term ailments? I don't know. Perhaps some of the doctors who use their interviews with patients as a chance for anti-Labour propaganda could use their critical faculties constructively and offer Mr. Bevan some ideas about all this.

* * *

Like some great bomb, the Tribunal has long since torn its way through the fabric of post-war English life; but bits of débris still keep falling. Now it is Mr. Teper, the Mayfair tailor who made the suits for Mr. Gibson, Mr. Belcher, and Mr. Key, who has packed up his family and his belongings and gone to start anew in America. Wherever he went in London, Mr. Teper said, people pointed and nudged and whispered: "There goes Teper, the Tribunal tailor." And at last he decided that he couldn't stand any more or it. Poor Mr. Teper! It was he who admitted in his evidence that he had "used his imagination" and "put two and two together"—and was told by Mr. Justice Lynskey: "One of your twos was missing."

* * *

What the inquiries, for which Mr. Teper is now held on Ellis Island, will reveal, I have, of course, no idea. It remains true that the Tribunal's steam roller has pressed heaviest (and sometimes least fairly) on witnesses who were not Crown servants. From time to time newspapers have been publishing disclaimers by business or professional men, that neither they nor their firms had any connection with Tribunal witnesses of the same name—which seems all wrong in view of the special statements that witnesses did not appear before the Tribunal as accused persons. I think some of the witnesses have a real grievance, since they didn't enjoy the ordinary forms of protection under the law, and questions were framed more suggestively and offensively in the Tribunal than they could have been in the Law Courts. Excellent speeches were made on behalf of some of the witnesses (notably by Sir Walter Monkton and Mr. Michael Eastham), but they scarcely penetrated beyond the walls of Church House. It is the headlines and gossip which have stuck. Nor did these witnesses receive any solace from the Report, which refrained from clearing any reputations except those of Civil Servants. It was because of such criticisms that some M.P.s questioned the whole procedure by special Tribunal. However, no one seems ready with a good alternative. The real problem is what Stanley Baldwin once called "the unthinking cruelty of modern publicity."

Alexander Werth, home from Eastern Europe where he has been doing an admirable job reporting for the *Manchester Guardian*, tells me that he disagrees with my interpretation of the Soviet motives in not allowing Russian girls, married to British subjects, to join their husbands in this country. He knows a number of these girls and tells me that I am wrong in suggesting that they are "glamorous spies." Few of them even speak English, still less good English. His own view is that the Soviet attitude is linked up with home propaganda, with all its pride in "Soviet citizenship." The Soviet press makes great play of Russian women who went home as "they could not bear to live in the West, far away from their own country." So a kind of competition has grown up between East and West in accumulating people who "choose freedom." Sometimes in Russia this "choosing" is not spontaneous (though often it is), but every such "choice" in favour of the Soviet Union is given publicity, whether the "chooser" be a wife who has not yet gone abroad or a Russian disillusioned in the West, or a Westerner who prefers to stay in Russia (there have been a few such cases, notably among the staff of the U.S. Embassy). This is the counterpart of the publicity given in the West to the Kravchenkos, Gouzenkos and all the rest of them. Russian wives who will not divorce their husbands are regarded as "disloyal," because they have played into the hands of British and not Russian propaganda. According to the canons of Soviet citizenship, the Russian authorities regard it as a bad case of "kowtowing to the West" to give up one's Soviet Motherland for a mere British husband. "That," says Werth, "is how these cases are presented to other Russians. If the Soviet authorities have realised by now that their attitude is causing a lot more trouble than it is worth, they now feel that prestige is involved and they cannot retreat."

* * *

If General MacArthur had wished to discredit the whole of his story about the Soviet spy system in the Pacific, he could have thought of no surer way than of naming as central figures of the ring Guenther Stein (a well-known and always Left-wing newspaper correspondent) and Agnes Smedley (for many years a leading advocate for Chinese Communism). Spy stories will go out of fashion if the spies turn out to be public people spying on behalf of causes which they publicly advocate! Indeed, they will cease to be spies. By way of retort, I suppose, the Soviet Union is now reported to have arrested Anne Louise Strong as a secret agent of a foreign power. This outdoes MacArthur. For Anna Louise Strong is certainly a fellow-traveller, if not a member of the Party. For some years editor of the *Moscow News*, she has long qualified for the worst anathemas of the Committee of Un-American Activities. If Anna Louise Strong is an American spy and not, as I believe, a very simple-minded pro-Communist American, then Mr. Truman's real name ends in -itch, and Stalin is a Dutchman.

* * *

Overheard at the Chantrey Bequest Exhibition: "Look, my dear, at that one. We don't get paintings like that these days at the Academy."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

I am the father of six children, grandfather of 12, and great-grandfather of four, but we do not discuss sex. The knowledge comes naturally.—Letter in *Evening News*. (Judy Squires.)

She disapproved of the kind of nurse who called her patient "My gastric ulcer."—*News Chronicle* (Raymond Challinor.)

——, fined £10 at Fleetwood for stealing fish, said he took the fish to get money for a £10 fine imposed on him in September for receiving stolen fish.—*Daily Mail.* (Mr. P. Johns.)

East Suffolk County Council, offering a reward of twopence for every rat killed, has been asked for double payment by a man who claims he catches rats on a Sunday.—*News Chronicle.* (E. M. Blackall.)

Why all this fuss about sex education in schools? I am sixteen and I taught my mother about reproduction, using the correct biological terms. The present generation of parents cannot tell their children how they came to be born because they do not know.—Letter in *Daily Mirror.* (D. E. Parsons.)

He was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment by Chatham magistrates because he could not pay a £2 fine imposed upon him for taking a piece of bread and a rasher of bacon from two dustbins in Gillingham.—*News Chronicle.* (D. M. Hawke.)

Morrison steel shelter wtd. now. Also Horseradish in April.—Advt. in Exeter *Express & Echo.* (Anthony Stirling.)

MINORITY PROBLEM

Did you here of the riots in Tyrone?
Ohone!
Such outrages never were known,
Ohone!
There was trouble between
The Orange and Green,
And various objects were thrown,
Ohone!
In Armagh and Down and Tyrone.

The voting according to plan
Began,
Sure we chose every loyal King's man
That ran—
And wasn't it wise,
In case of surprise
Supporters of Dail Eireann
To ban,
So the vote went according to plan?

The vote for partition Belfast
Has cast
Means our rulers of thirty years past
Will last—
Sure, we're giving no rope
To Republic or Pope,
And the verdict leaves Dublin downcast,
Aghast,
But Old England relies on Belfast.

The British know Ulster stands true,
They do,
Since ever the Red, White and Blue
We flew—
Though in the long run
All the world may be one,
Old Ireland will always be two,
Be two,
While Ulster to Britain stands true.

For Union in Europe Whitehall
May call,
Divided, both great States and small
Will fall,
But though Union is best
For the rest of the West,
It would not suit Old Ireland at all,
At all,
So partition is backed by Whitehall.

But just look at the riots in Tyrone,
Ohone!
Such hooligans never were known,
Ohone!
There's the hurling of bricks
And the firing of ricks
When the loyalty of Ulster is shown,
Ohone!
To Commonwealth, Kingdom and Throne.

SAGITTARIUS

DEAD MEN'S MONEY

THE annual "love-feast" of the parishioners of St. Clement's, Eastcheap, in the City of London, took place every Maundy Thursday from 1491 until 1880. A landowner who died in 1491 had left five shillings a year for this purpose, hoping that parishioners who had quarrelled during the year might thus be brought forgivingly together. By 1880, when the Royal Commission on City of London Parochial Charities discovered it, this trust had multiplied its income so many times that the five-shilling love-feast had become an annual dinner at Richmond, consumed by about eighty business men of the parish (now a non-residential area) and costing about £70. They got the dinner whether they had quarrelled or not. "We find it embarrassing to inquire," the vestry clerk told the Royal Commission, "so we invite everybody."

In the same parish, a charity was founded in 1585 to pay 26*s.* 8*d.* yearly "for the maintenance of some godly, virtuous and well-disposed scholar resident in the University of Cambridge or Oxford." In 300 years this fund multiplied itself about thirty times, but the churchwardens, instead of asking the Court of Chancery to vary the terms of the charity, continued to pay precisely 26*s.* 8*d.* a year towards the maintenance of one student at a University. The Royal Commission found it odd (though it seems to have been typical) that the love-feast had spread itself so generously while education still got its original mite.

Similar cases, in which bloated funds are squandered on fatuous purposes or meanly administered for good ends, are known to number thousands to-day. *Burnett's Foundation for Treatises on the Goodness of the Creator*, founded in 1814, had inspired 53 pious essayists by the time the Royal Commission discovered it, three hundred copies of each prize-winning effort having been printed and distributed at the cost of the trust; the first prize-winner got £1,200 and became Principal of Aberdeen University, and in 1894 the prize would have been £4,800 if the Home Secretary had not made an order under the Endowed Institutions (Scotland) Act, 1878, diverting the money to the founding of Aberdeen University lectureships.

The *Fulbourn Bread and Sixpences Fund* (1474) endows the Parish of All Saints, Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire, with £215 a year distributable in bread and sixpences. *Henry Smith's Charity* provides £8,000 a year (from an income of £60,000) for the relief of those discriminating enough to have had Mr. Henry Smith for an ancestor, though it now also allocates money (under a Chancery Court order of 1889) to the poor of about 200 widely-dispersed parishes—to the accompaniment of much chicanery and domiciliary wangling among its grumbling recipients. The *Norwich Foundation for a Sermon in Low Dutch* requires the Minister of a Norwich church to preach annually in Dutch because in 1619 the town had a Netherlands colony which had obtained the right to occupy the choir-stalls. For centuries the Minister learned this annual exercise by heart and delivered it to empty pews and stolid vergers; then, in 1921, the Charity Commissioners got the trustees to agree that, whenever they had no Dutch quorum to be preached to, the money that would have gone to the preacher should go to the Netherlands Christian Sailors' Union instead.

A recital of such cases could fill volumes. It has, indeed, filled one, *The Dead Hand*, a collection of addresses given by Sir Arthur (later Lord) Hobhouse, a Charity Commissioner and member of the Endowed Schools Commission seventy years ago. A selective list appears also in Lord Beveridge's *Voluntary Action*, which, now that national insurance has turned the population into a vast Friendly Society and may seem to have thwarted so many of the impulses of private charity, outlines a policy for the rational use of "dormant moneys" of many kinds.

No one knows how many charitable trusts there are. But to-day, while large numbers of them have seen their *raison d'être* destroyed by social legislation, many vital services still dependent on voluntary support are starved of funds and likely to be more and more hampered by a facile belief among possible supporters that the State is now all-providing. It is known, indeed, that the nominal value of securities held by the Official Trustees of Charity Funds on December 31st, 1945, was £111,282,240. All charitable foundations are formally required to send annual accounts of their revenues to the Charity Commissioners, but there is no way of ensuring either that this is done or that any report is made when the object of the charity no longer exists. Nor can the Commissioners find out about the formation of all new trusts; unless directly notified by solicitors and other trustees they are dependent on the register of wills at Somerset House and on news items in the press. A trust created by deed during the lifetime of the donor may never come to their notice. They receive accounts from about 56,000 charities, and the Ministry of Education know of about 30,000 more that are specifically educational in purpose; but the total in each case may be vastly greater—no one knows.

The Court of Chancery holds probably £3,000,000 of frustrated money, paid in by the Public Trustee and other agencies unable to fulfil the original wishes of the donors; and the Treasury, at the end of 1945, held roughly £150,000 in intestacies—a form of *bona vacantia* which, in Sweden, has been applied by the Government to many purposes of social amelioration. Bankers retain dormant balances amounting probably to £16,000,000—three millions in the joint stock banks, nine in the Bank of England, three in the Trustee Savings Banks and one in the Post Office Savings Bank. There are in existence funds for relieving the victims of mining disasters, shipwrecks, earthquakes and other "acts of God" which in some cases happened generations ago. The Oaks Colliery Explosion Relief Fund, established in 1866, had an undistributed surplus of £16,000 in 1939. The sinking of the *Titanic*, the Gresford Colliery explosion, the Fenland floods, and countless other half or wholly-forgotten stories are still represented in secretariats holding sums of money which, in total, are very substantial.

Hostility has so far been aroused by every endeavour to loosen the "dead hand" on this idle, objectiveless wealth. Why shouldn't a man leave his fortune to a home for left-handed sign-writers, or endow a charity for the distribution of flannel petticoats among octogenarian spinsters living in the shadow of Nether Muckle's church steeple? The enlightened policy represented in recent legislation for the over-ruling of modern freak wills has not yet outlived mistaken respect for the eccentric wishes of the dead; and the same jealous anger is apt to confront any attempt to find beneficent uses for money bequeathed by cranks in past centuries. Meanwhile, eligible purposes fail for lack of funds. Homes for the aged, training schemes for the disabled, research foundations of proved social value face a future made grim by the growing popular delusion that the State is now "seeing to everything." Many of these organisations are working officially for Uno in a cause which must transcend all others—international understanding. The New Education Fellowship, for example, has vital projects in hand for fulfilling the purposes of the Education Act, 1944 (a measure which must stand or fall by the work of voluntary organisations), and for investigating throughout the world those influences in education which, by crippling the minds of men, hamper international goodwill.

From time to time it has been suggested that these oddly originating funds—or such of them as can no longer be applied to their intended purpose—should be applied to the reduction of the National Debt. This would be a dreary, unimaginative solution. The amount of truly

"dormant" money involved—say £30 millions at most—is too small for its use in this way to affect the Exchequer significantly or even to win applause from Mr. Hoffman; and to allow it to fall into the Treasury's indiscriminate maw would be to forfeit the chance of using this potentially useful nest-egg for worth-while ends.

What is needed is a measure enabling commonsense to be applied in the re-definition of purposes. As it is, the powers of the Ministry of Education in relation to the re-defining of educational trusts have been much widened by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1948. But neither the Charity Commissioners nor the High Court can re-define the conditions of a non-educational trust of more than £50 without the consent of a majority of its trustees, and the new scheme must conform as closely to the terms of the trust as the changed circumstances allow—the so-called *cy près* principle. In relation to the whole problem this has never been more than a gesture: rationalisation can only come by legislation, as was done (after Royal Commissions) in the case of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 and the City of London Parochial Charities Act of 1883. "A treasure house of oddities," Lord Beveridge calls the latter, "illustrating the waste that may occur through leaving charities perpetual while the world around them changes." The case for a Royal Commission on Dormant Funds was never so strong as it is to-day. C. H. ROLPH

AMERICAN MELODRAMA

FOR more than six months the Hiss-Chambers case has intermittently dominated American newspaper headlines. It has been the inevitable theme of dinner-table discussion here in the capital, and almost every social gathering of big and little bureaucratic dignitaries ends with raucous argument over the affair. This morbid preoccupation is certain to increase when the trial of Alger Hiss for perjury begins on February 24 in New York.

In a sense, it has become a trial of our times; for a variety of reasons, millions of Americans have vicarious emotional investments in the outcome. With Washington divided into pro-Hiss and anti-Hiss camps the bitterness of each side has steadily mounted. Despite the historic presumption of innocence until a verdict of guilty is rendered, conservative commentators have tended to write as if Hiss were already damned, while some adherents of Hiss have concluded with equal self-righteousness that Whittaker Chambers is an unmitigated liar and that any evidence he adduces in support of his testimony can only be sheer fantasy or frame-up.

This weird business began last summer. On August 3, Chambers, a pudgy, solemn-faced man employed as a senior editor of *Time*, appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee in response to a subpoena. There, under the klieg-lights and in the carnival atmosphere traditionally associated with great scenes of the Congressional heresy-hunt, Chambers confessed. He testified that up until 1937 (the date was later amended to 1938) he had been an underground agent of the Communist party, working closely with a network of Communists inside Franklin D. Roosevelt's Administration. He named as his colleagues a number of men whose Communist affiliations or sympathies have long been recognised; most of them, when called to the stand, stubbornly refused to affirm or deny the accusation. But he also named Alger Hiss; from that moment, neither man has enjoyed much peace or solitude.

Hiss was at that time the President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a well-financed, eminently respectable enterprise founded through the benevolence of the late Andrew Carnegie for the lofty purposes indicated by its name. Handsome, talented and well-known in Washington, Hiss graduated from the Harvard Law School in 1929, and in the following year served as law secretary to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. With that auspicious start he subsequently played numerous roles of varying significance in the Roosevelt era. Justice Felix Frankfurter helped to sponsor him; Hiss worked for the legal staff of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, then served as counsel to the celebrated Nye investigation of the munitions industry that agitated this country in the mid-1930's. From that post he went to the Department of Justice as a deputy to Stanley Reed, who later became a member of the Supreme Court; then, in 1936, he shifted to the State Department, where he remained for eleven years. He was one of those who accompanied F.D.R. to the Yalta Conference and he was the secretary of the San Francisco Conference at which the United Nations was founded.

Unlike many of those whom Chambers identified as former comrades, however, Hiss neither invoked constitutional grounds for refusing to answer back nor did he equivocate in his reply. Two days later, he swore before the House Committee that he had never been a Communist, that he could not recall ever meeting Whittaker Chambers and that he could not identify him from photographs produced in the hearing-room. He asked, however, for a face-to-face meeting with his accuser. At this stage the Congressional searchers for subversion, accustomed to believing the worst about any alleged Communist or fellow-traveller, displayed authentic bewilderment. One after another they agreed they had never heard two such convincing witnesses as Whittaker Chambers and Alger Hiss; and yet, unless this were a monumental case of mistaken identity, one of them was plainly lying. Therefore, with warm assent from Hiss, they arranged for the two men to meet in a New York hotel room in the presence of the Committee two days later.

It was an extraordinary scene. In the interim, Hiss, presumably after long self-examination, had vaguely suggested the possibility that Chambers might actually have been a free-lance newspaperman he once knew under the name of "George Crosley." Thus the immediate question was whether Hiss would recognise him as "Crosley" or cling to his initial claim that his accuser was a total stranger. When they met, Hiss asked Chambers to read excerpts from a magazine. He examined his mouth, asserting that the man he knew as Crosley had unusually stained, crooked teeth. Finally he announced that he was no longer in doubt; Chambers was "George Crosley." But this did not resolve the mystery. For Hiss insisted that "Crosley" was not—to his knowledge at least—a Communist, that he had momentarily befriended "Crosley" when he was footloose, and that "Crosley" had really turned out to be quite an unpleasant character. Chambers insisted that he had never used that name; that he had been known only as "Carl" during his underground days; that he and Hiss had in reality been close, devoted friends for many months; and that he had virtually used the Hiss home as his headquarters and—at the time of his own break with the Party—implored Hiss to get clear, too.

With Hiss's admission that he had known Chambers in some guise, the Committee turned against him; yet the incident was still surely inconclusive, and it might have remained that way if Hiss had not challenged Chambers to repeat his accusations in a forum where he was not immune to the laws of libel. (It has always been the good fortune of the House Committee that testimony given before any Congressional group is privileged.) Some weeks later Chambers was interviewed on a radio programme. He reiterated his charges. He added confidently: "Alger Hiss will not sue." Several weeks later Hiss filed suit for slander.

Now, under American procedure, attorneys for both sides are permitted to examine the rivals in a libel suit before trial. One day in Baltimore, Hiss's attorneys interrogated Chambers. Although the transcript of that quiz has not yet been made public, it may be assumed that they were challenging Chambers' credibility and pointing out that he had offered no documentary evidence of his relationship with Hiss. It was at that point that the "pumpkin papers" entered the case. Chambers abruptly produced a folder of papers purportedly stolen from the State Department more than a decade ago. Subsequently he led Congressional investigators to his farm in Maryland where, inside a pumpkin, he turned up microfilmed copies of other documents. These, he claimed, he had put away as an insurance against the day that Soviet agents might threaten either him or his family. In that event, the papers would have been turned over to the police. Included in his collection, too, were handwritten copies of three notes allegedly scribbled by Hiss and said to be summaries of cables classified as secret within the Department. Chambers claimed that Hiss was one of the key sources of such material and knew that it was to be transmitted to a Soviet intelligence agent.

With this unexpected turn the tumult over the Hiss-Chambers episode grew far more frenzied. For Chambers was now purporting to expose more than the existence of a Communist cell within the Government service; he was for the first time suggesting—in contradiction to his earlier testimony—that this was an espionage ring and that Alger Hiss had been not merely a philosophical or practising Communist but also a willing cog in the Russian machine.

Once again Hiss denied everything. Men and women who had known him well echoed his disclaimers. Although Hiss had served on various levels in the Roosevelt Government for nearly fifteen years, he had rarely been known as one of the more fiery New Dealers. In some quarters the rather curious defence advanced ran something like this: "Alger couldn't have been a Communist—he was too ambitious." Others simply maintained that it was preposterous to believe that he would have knowingly transmitted information to a Soviet representative. But a grand jury sitting in New York for many months finally returned an indictment, charging that Hiss had lied in at least two phases of his testimony before the jury. Although the grand jury sessions were secret, there are authoritative reports that the Government presented evidence designed to show that some of the documents in Chambers' possession were typed on the same typewriter as personal letters written by Hiss several years ago. Hiss was said to have replied that Chambers must somehow have obtained possession of the machine; and it is presumed that this point will be contested at length at the forthcoming trial. Perjury was the most serious crime for which Hiss could be indicted, since the statute of limitations on espionage requires that prosecution must occur within three years of the offence.

The passions this case has aroused are directly related to the violent conflicts of the Roosevelt epoch. For the more hysterical wing of American reaction is eager to prove once and for all that Mr. Roosevelt was a tool of Moscow, as the Hearst newspapers and comparable journals argued throughout his regime; if it can be shown that Alger Hiss was a Russian agent, surely this is proof—so the Hearstlings argue—that the Reds ran the Roosevelt revolution. In a curious way some liberals have reacted on an almost equally simple-minded level. The Hiss story as told by Chambers recalls those years when many liberals here joined hands in various popular front enterprises; many of them look back painfully to the period before the Nazi-Soviet Pact as an age of innocence which they would prefer to forget. They seem to ask: "If Hiss went as far as is now alleged, might we not all have done the same thing in the same circumstances?" Those were the days when the Spanish Republic was fighting for its life, when Munich was in the making and when the Soviet Union seemed the only pillar of peace and progress in the Western world. Feeling more realistic now, many liberals

do not like to be told they once were dupes of men like Chambers.

But, most of all, this case cuts across the desperate effort to rewrite the history of the Roosevelt years. The truth, of course, is that the Communists were neither the inspiration nor the architects of that utterly pragmatic adventure known as the New Deal. They were scattered through the Government and they were comparatively unmolested before the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Unquestionably some of them were finally drawn into the Soviet espionage net. To deny that they existed is absurd; to suggest that the minimum-wage law enacted under Roosevelt's leadership was therefore a blueprint from Moscow is equally fantastic. Like Mr. Wallace on the Left, the Right in the U.S.A. still displays a painful misconception of both the scope and limitations of the American Communist movement. It sees in the alleged crimes of Alger Hiss the fulfilment of its most fearful nightmares.

Ultimately the Hiss-Chambers case may achieve a more memorable place in the literary annals of deceit than in the history books. Unlike many ex-Communist informers, Chambers does not conform to a stereotype; a one-time poet, he enlisted in the Communist party in the prosperous 1920's when it was a much smaller and irrelevant sect. Instead of deserting to Catholicism, he embraced the pacifist Quaker doctrine. The final scenes in this duel may reach a higher peak than previous climaxes of the Congressional red-hunt.

Washington, D.C. JAMES A. WECHSLER

PEIPING FALLS

ON Saturday night, January 22nd, the lights came on again in Peiping, symbolizing that this ancient city had passed from war to peace and that the Communists have taken, virtually unscathed, their probable future capital and the traditional intellectual and cultural centre of all China. For over a year Peiping had been virtually a Nationalist island in a sea of Communist-held territory; for forty days it was a city under siege. On December 14th Communist troops moved to within one mile of the city's ancient walls and cut off all its overland connections, including the nearby port city of Tientsin. Their capture of the city's main airport made Peiping dependent on two perilously small airfields cleared within the city.

When this correspondent took off from Shanghai on January 19th in one of the last planes to run the blockade, Tientsin had already fallen four days before to the attacking Communist troops. All the Chinese were wondering whether the Communists would take Peiping by assault and destroy part of its historic and beautiful old buildings or whether they would be able to come to an agreement with General Fu Tso-yi, commander of the so-called "North China Bandit Suppression Headquarters."

When our plane had traversed seven hundred miles of Communist-held North China and arrived over this city, we started coming down from five thousand feet in tight circles in order to avoid the anti-aircraft fire of encircling Communist troops who had previously fired at us. Both the crew and passengers held their breath as we landed; we had to skim over an inner wall to land, and used up the whole length of the small field before the pilot could halt the plane.

Within the city the people (perhaps because of their calm North Chinese temperament) were surprisingly unflurried despite occasional shells which Communists had been lobbing over and the growing shortage of food, insufficient water and lack of electricity. Unruffled, bearded old Mandarins strolled, hands in sleeves, along the street, philosophically ignoring the current dramatic turns in the history of this old city. The most obvious signs of the times were the gangs of civilians with padded garments and shovels over their shoulders going to dig trenches outside the city or to clear a new and longer airfield within the city, under the red walls of the famous "Imperial City". A tour of the fourteen gates in the city's walls showed the odorous "honeycarts" were still carrying out night-soil from the city's toilets to fertilize Communist-held farmland.

The most frantic activity in Peiping in ensuing days was the effort of about a dozen foreign and three dozen Chinese newspapermen to pin down a myriad rumours about peace negotiations. A delegation of leading citizens went out to meet the Communists, but this was obviously a means of allowing Peiping's peace-desiring citizens to let off steam since General Fu was the only man with the power to decide peace or war. It was clear on January 21st, that peace was near when the heads of the local Kuomintang secret service organization hurriedly departed.

Peace negotiations had been handled by General Fu's Number Two, General Teng Pao-shan, who slipped across the lines on January 12th and negotiated for five days with Communist General Lin Piao. The Communists knew that in Fu they had a tough opponent who was popular with his troops because he treated them well, and who was capable of putting up a fairly good fight. He had shown his abilities when he had thrown them out of Kalgan last year. Furthermore, he was dug in behind a considerable trench-work system in heavily walled and beloved Peiping. After the recapture of Kalgan and the taking of Tientsin, the Communists had about three hundred thousand troops to storm Peiping, but by doing so they would certainly incur losses as well as the disfavour of millions who love Peiping as China's most beautiful and historic city. In retreating to Peiping, Fu had climbed into a priceless vase in the knowledge that anyone who struck at him would have to destroy the vase.

When Fu's delegate brought back the Communist terms he was favourably impressed, but he apparently baulked at two things. He had wanted his troops to remain under his command or to keep their old designations. The Communists ruled against retaining any more private armies and yielded to him only to the extent that a month was to elapse before the reorganisation of Fu's command as an integral part of the Communist-led "People's Liberation Army".

General Fu did not want to surrender before Nanking out of a feeling of loyalty to his commander, Chiang Kai-shek, but the way was cleared on January 21st when Chiang Kai-shek stepped down. On the following day General Fu's headquarters announced a thirteen point agreement. By this an immediate cease-fire was instituted, and all work on military fortifications stopped. Peiping is now governed by a joint governing council of seven men, with three members appointed by Fu and four by the Communists. The bulk of the armies within the city are being moved out to be integrated into the Communist-led armies. The security of the city is being guarded by police and supplementary troops from both armies. All governmental, educational, financial, cultural and business organisations are asked to continue as usual with guarantees of the safety of personnel and warnings against damage to or loss of property. The National Government's gold yuan currency is to remain until exchange regulations are promulgated. The life and property of foreigners and foreign diplomats are guaranteed. Local newspapers are allowed to carry on as before until a new registration is carried out. Religious freedom and the protection of ancient relics are assured. Postal and telegraphic services are to continue as before. The agreement ends with the injunction: "People of all walks of life are requested to carry on their life as usual, and no public panic shall be created."

Peace did not come immediately to Peiping. After the cease-fire a group of diehard Kuomintang officers apparently ordered their troops to fire into the city, and occasional bursts of rifle and machine gun fire were heard for days afterwards. On the day after the proclamation I sortied from a city gate on the road to Yenching University. Inside the gatehouse there was a white space on the wall where a picture of Chiang Kai-shek had been taken down the day before, leaving only a picture of Sun Yat-sen. Outside the city many Nationalist troops had not heard of the peace. Road-blocks still barred the bridges, and we had to jeep across a frozen stream to penetrate no-man's-land. After a quarter of a mile a shot fired in the air brought us to a quick halt. A young Communist officer, wearing a padded yellow uniform without insignia, smilingly explained he had called to us, but we had not heeded him. When we explained we wanted to go farther into Communist-held territory he took us back to a nearby headquarters, necessitating jeeping across frozen fields to avoid road-blocks. At the local headquarters town of Haitien we saw long wooden ladders on rollers which had been constructed to scale the walls of Peiping. While we awaited permission, a surly young Communist officer, wearing an American-made parka, made it clear he had no liking for Americans. After a brief wait we were told we could not go on, but within two days the road would be open for all.

As Communist troops and political workers dribble into Peiping they are receiving a fairly warm welcome. Students and professors have turned strongly pro-Communist in the last year, more because of complete disgust with the Kuomintang government than because of love for the Communist programme. Many citizens of Peiping are welcoming the Communists, because they believe the Communists will make Peiping their national capital instead of Nanking, which has held this title only during the last twenty years. But most Peipingites welcome the Communists because they think this means the civil war is near an end. Sceptical, worldly-wise Peiping is not yet sure it will prefer the Communists' "Brave New World" to the old world, but it is quite certain it prefers peace to war.

Peiping ANDREW ROTH

INTOLERANCE

I HAD not seen *Intolerance* since 1918; indeed, its present showing at the Hampstead Everyman is its first for thirty-one years. When I first saw the film it lasted for three hours; but that was the heroic age of the cinema and, adapted to these comparatively degenerate days, it has now been cut to two and a half. The sweep and scope of the film are prodigious. It consists of four stories which run concurrently, the camera passing continuously from one to the other. As the film proceeds the shots are shorter and the transitions occur ever more rapidly.

The first story is from contemporary America. It is a story of strikes, unemployment, misery and crime, originating in the interference of meddlesome Puritans with the lives of the workers. The second is the Christ story; the third, the story of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, while the fourth depicts the life of Babylon and its capture by Cyrus of Persia.

All four stories have been chosen to illustrate a theme, the theme of man's cruelty to man. Man's miseries, it teaches, are of his own making; they spring from intolerance and the violence which is the fruit of intolerance. The film, in fact, is a vivid commentary upon Gibbon's verdict that "history is a record of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind." At the same time, it suggests that the remedy lies in our own hands; it is necessary merely that human beings should be nicer to one another. A trite moral? Yet the film brings it home with an unprecedented force. Griffiths was a master of suspense and excitement.

As the four stories move to their respective climaxes, the excitement mounts and mounts. So passionately do we want to know what is going to happen that we can scarcely bear the continual interruption of one story and resumption of the next. Yet the transitions are managed with

consummate skill. You come away exhausted, flat and drained of all emotion, imbued with the determination that never again will you so much as squash a fly—precisely in fact, the frame of mind which Griffith's intensely pacifist intention was designed to produce. You come away also with reflections—the first, on the deterioration of the cinema. Who, to-day, would venture to make a film three hours in length to adorn a moral or point a tale? Who, in other words, would dream of using a film as an allegory? It is, in my view, one at least of the purposes of literary and dramatic art to convey some view of the universe as a whole and the nature and, perhaps, the purpose of human life within it; its function, in other words, is in part didactic. Literature and drama have sought to perform this function by indicating how human life *might* be lived, while, at the same time, depicting how by contrast it is, *in fact*, lived. Most of the world's great stories and dramas have not merely been constructed—they have been told and constructed *for a purpose*. I am making a personal avowal rather than suggesting a canon of criticism when I say that, outside music and painting, all those writers and dramatists that have made the greatest appeal to me, Homer, for example, Milton, Bunyan, Gibbon, Tolstoi, Ibsen or Shaw, have been didactic in this sense.

Now, the film could be a supreme instrument for conveying messages, suggesting morals and to driving home lessons. Consider the immensity of its resources—how it can draw upon all time and place for its material, teaching philosophy by way of allegory and illustrating history by the vivid portrayal of man's past. Reflect, for example, on the possibilities of a film on the life and death of Socrates, on the fall of Rome, or, even, on the life of Christ. The point I wish to make is that in early pioneering days—for example, in *Intolerance*—film-makers were prepared at least to entertain the possibility that such things might fall within the scope of their art. In those days all doors seemed to be open for those who were prepared to exploit the new medium with courage, vision and imagination. Now, the doors are closed, closed so fast that at least 90 per cent. of contemporary films are content to proceed upon the assumption that the only subject of human interest is the relation between the sexes, the only possible motive of male action to compete for the possession of the person of an attractive female, the only possible motive of female action to raise the stakes and increase the field of the competition, and the only possible audience one of sex-starved adolescents.

Secondly, the enormous advantage enjoyed by the silent films! This I attribute to three causes. First, the human race looks much better than it sounds. While this, by and large, is true of all of it, it is still truer of the female part of it, and it is truest of all of the American female part of it. Inured by years of practice, I am, nevertheless, still unable to restrain the slight shudder of distaste that runs down my spine whenever an American female star opens her mouth for the first time. Secondly, if you cannot talk, you have to act, and the acting in *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance* is a revelation. Using only the instrument of their bodies, actors have to convey meaning and express emotion by gesture and grimace. Go and see Mae Marsh as the young wife in the modern story in *Intolerance*, and the odds are that you will come away, as I did, with the conviction that she is the best film actress you ever saw.

Thirdly, there is speed. The film—it cannot be too firmly insisted—is for action. Its resources for portraying rapid action on a vast scale—in the management of crowds, for example, or in flight and pursuit—are unprecedented. The early film-makers realised their opportunity and exploited it with such gusto that at one time no film was complete that did not end in a flight and pursuit. In *Intolerance*, the "flight-pursuit" sequences are superb.

The introduction of speech slowed up the action, which is suspended at the most thrilling moments, in order that we may be regaled with imbecile wise-cracks, the squat monosyllables of a tough guy, or the amorous frenzies of a love-sick girl. From many films, known as psychological, action has to all intents and purposes been excluded, and we see plays in celluloid instead of in the flesh. It is the excess rather than the introduction of speech that has robbed the film of its greatest asset.

A final reflection. What is wanted is a combination of the high aims, the vision, the sense of responsibility and the consciousness of mission of D. W. Griffith, reinforced by modern technique. Again and again watching *Intolerance* one found oneself saying: "If only Griffith had had modern technique, including speech, at his disposal, what a film he could have made." What a film indeed, a producer could still make, if only he could forget the box office and use the cinema, as Griffith used it, not to debauch or, even, to reflect, but to form public taste.

C. E. M. JOAD.

SO THEY SAY . . .

The Solidarity of the Press

Daily Mirror, January 27:

A Sunday newspaper, *The People*, has jubilantly announced that (at a cost of heaven knows how many thousands of pounds) they have secured the memoirs of this notorious man [Stanley].

Sunday Pictorial, January 30:

The fantastic sum of £10,000 is being paid [by *The People*] for this clap-trap . . .

Picture Post, February 12:

The People and the *Sunday Dispatch* have shown, quite openly, that they despise their readers . . .

The People, February 6:

At least two other Sunday newspapers made offers [for Stanley's story] that were greatly in excess of our own. Another newspaper . . . was so eager to secure a first interview with Stanley . . . that it telephoned *The People* three times to solicit help. That newspaper was the *Daily Mirror* . . . And the *Sunday Pictorial*, no doubt under orders from its stable companion, the *Daily Mirror*, then jumped in . . . almost as mad as a dear old lady who'd lost the prime bargain at the sales . . . These newspapers . . . are on more familiar ground in exploiting sex and salacity . . . To-day, for example, the *Sunday Pictorial* declares that the mothers of Maltby are complaining that their young daughters "talk of nothing but sex, sex, sex . . ."

The People, February 13:

THE LAST WORD IN HUMBUG.

Here is the letter that *Picture Post* wrote to Stanley on December 28 last year: "Dear Mr. Stanley,—I think perhaps you will agree that a picture story of "A Day With Mr. Stanley" would be very interesting just now, and we on our part would very much like to do it . . . You will remain of great interest to those who have never had the chance of meeting you and we should like, with the camera, to give our readers an introduction."

I have asked "Picture Post" for its comment upon this attack. The Editor informs me that his journal will carry the following reply:

The People, Sunday newspaper which is publishing Mr. Stanley's "life-story" in the interests of public morality, declares that it has no intention of defending its action, or of answering the damaging attacks of other papers. It then gives up a column on its front page to:—

(1) Comparing itself to Lord Northcliffe, "one of the greatest newspaper men of our time."
(2) Attacking *Picture Post for* "humbug," on the ground that in December, before the findings of the Lynskey Tribunal, this paper wrote to Mr. Stanley suggesting that some pictures should be taken of him in his flat.

(3) A request for public approval, on its own and Stanley's behalf, because the £10,000 paid for his "life-story" has "all gone to his creditors through the Official Receiver" instead of Mr. Stanley's "pocketing the lot."

The answer to point (2) is simple. *Before* the findings of the Lynskey Tribunal it was a matter of journalistic common sense to secure photographs of Stanley. Every national paper in the country either took its own, or bought photographs from agencies.

The answer to point (3) is blunt. We give no praise to either *The People* or to Stanley for handing the £10,000 over to the Official Receiver. They had little choice. Stanley is an undischarged bankrupt. To have done anything else with the money would have carried grave risks.

The answer to point (1) is a short word seldom seen in print.

Evening Standard, February 4:

Editorial:

Neither Members of Parliament nor judicial tribunals could uphold the probity and honour of public life without the continuing support of the British people for the highest standards of conduct.

Londoner's Diary:

Unlike those who came to grief with him, Belcher has no intention of raking up the mud for money. But I hear that he has written a short autobiography. . . . It begins in the *Sunday Express* on Sunday and will be widely read.

* * *

The Theory of Relativity

Daily Herald, February 3:

AIR LINES NOW MAKING MONEY

Lord Pakenham, Civil Aviation Minister [announced] in the Lords last night that he had set the Corporation a definite target . . . to reduce their deficits from the £9,000,000 expected in 1948-49 to £5,500,000 next year . . .

* * *

Department of Second Thoughts

Daily Express, January 26:

Controlled scarcity is the system in which people come to think of snoek as if it were as good as salmon, marge as if it equalled butter.

Daily Express, February 5:

Well, let it be said that there *has* been a vast improvement in margarine. The best brands are very good indeed . . . AUTOLYCUS.

EX-GUNNER

ESCAPED the exacting service of the guns
But not the exciting memory in the veins;
As seas sing in a shell, their violence
Remains with us as a strange turbulence.

For us, Faust's triangle and signature
But neither Helen, nor second youth, nor power;
Only apprenticeship to a mystery
And short illusory moments of mastery.

Those foul-mouthed, tyrannous, and bloody guns
That we have oiled and greased, washed free of mud,
Deployed, raised, lowered, loaded, dragged and fired
Are like a woman's memory in the blood.

We spoke our drills, our spells for remote murder,
Held needles steady in the throat of thunder,
Prayed backwards, served a sinister calculation
And the daily intimate needs of ammunition;

Swung up our polished years into the breech
And rammed them home, and felt it slam across
Shoving the hand away—the rough reproach
Lost in the shattering orgasm of the piece.

We shook our four-gun curses at the hooves
That rode the trackless sky in a lurching lens,
Small bursting puffs of hate about those lives
That were the engines' fuel the bombs' fuze;

Kept vigils, yelled responses, paid devotion
To nice adjustment, exquisite calibration
Of life and death—ourselves the ammunition
Briefly dispersed in a far-off commotion.

R. N. CURREY

The Arts and Entertainment

RICHARD WILSON AND HIS CIRCLE

For a landscape painter, particularly an eighteenth-century landscape painter, Richard Wilson was amazingly varied; much more varied, for instance, than an artist like Claude Lorraine. But even in his most Claudian compositions he never goes beyond Claude, just as he never goes beyond Cuyp, Ruysdael, Jaspar Poussin, or any of the painters who most obviously inspired him. Wilson's one great gift was sensibility. Among the sixty paintings now on view (together with a yet larger number of drawings) at the Tate, there is scarcely one that does not possess a formal charm and delicacy of perception similar to that which we find in Thomson's *Seasons* and Pope's *Windsor Forest*. But sensibility, so dear to the English, is no more than a minor qualification of genius, and Wilson, in spite of masterpieces like the *Cader Idris* at the National Gallery and the *Arch in Kew Gardens* (No. 23 at the Tate Gallery) emerges from his exhibition as a minor talent, infinitely charming but not, alas, the genius we may previously have believed him.

It was perhaps the abundance of his gifts that prevented Wilson from achieving, except in rare instances, the intensity of great art. It must have seemed so easy, so delightful, to repeat the successes of Claude, Cuyp, Jaspar Poussin; to take the mystery of one, the glow of another, and infuse them into some unassuming English "prospect." History, too, was against him. English landowners, like Sir Watkin Williams-Wynne, cultured men who had done the Grand Tour, found in him an artist who could give their estates the dignity of the Roman Campagna without robbing them of their natural appearance. But his sense of continuity with the Old Masters did little to foster independence of vision. Too often Wilson seems to have seen nature through a Claude glass—that curious ocular adjunct which, by a deft tinting of the lens (darker to left, right and foreground), enabled the eighteenth-century dilletante to see nature as she ought to be, the gentle and submissive handmaid of Art. A great painter, by re-thinking every inch of the formula, could have achieved masterpieces through it.

Yet the Wilson exhibition is full of excellent things. No period, no manner is without its masterpiece. Earliest is the large view of *Dover* (No. 7): a composition of marvellous directness, clear and honest as a Jan van der Heyden. This picture makes one almost regret that Wilson ever came under Italian influence. It may be compared with the exquisite landscapes that Gainsborough painted in early youth—the exhibition has a fine example in *A View of Dedham* (No. 152)—before he abandoned them for the millinery elegances of his later manner. Wilson's visit to Italy furnishes several splendid pictures. Of these, the finest is undoubtedly Mr. Brinsley Ford's *View of Narni* (No. 30). It unites Claude's placing and Cuyp's honeyed light in an epitome of all that the Mediterranean meant to the eighteenth-century Englishman. Another Ford picture, *The Temple of Minerva Medica* (No. 33), has the distinction of being singled out for particular praise by Constable. No doubt its unusual depth of tone appealed to him. Returned to England, Wilson continued to paint admirable records of the Mediterranean, certain of his inventions, like *The White Monk*, gaining such popularity that Wilson saw fit to repeat them at least a dozen times. In spite of these, he managed to paint a handful of authentic masterpieces. To these belong *The Arch at Kew Gardens* (No. 23), which for many years passed as a view of the Villa Borghese, and which has the monumentality of Poussin but a vision peculiar to Wilson alone; *The River Dee near Eaton Hall* (No. 4), a translation of the English countryside into a luminous pastoral that, nevertheless, in its treatment of the shimmering poplars on the distant bank, anticipates Constable and the Impressionists, and the astonishing series of Welsh landscapes. (It is interesting to note that Wales has inspired another occasionally flimsy landscape painter, Mr. John Piper, to create works of a most moving intensity.) Of these the most remarkable are the two pictures from the Walker Art Gallery and the little storm scene (No. 25) depicting with absolute faithfulness nature in one of her least beatific moments.

The exhibition is rounded off with one room devoted to Wilson's drawings, and another to his precursors and followers. The former are uniformly pretty, but, with few exceptions—e.g., the ghostly *Still Life* (No. 121) and Mr. Oppé's *River Scene* (No. 125)—little more; the latter extremely interesting, but why no Francisque Millet? Why no Hubert Robert? Robert, who was in Rome in 1752, the year of Wilson's visit, seems to be the strongest influence in, for instance, *The Villa Emiliana* (No. 26) and the numerous little sanguine drawings of Italian ruins. It remains to be said that there is an admirable catalogue, well illustrated and with an excellent introduction by Miss Mary Woodall.

DAVID CARRITT

A FRENCH ANTIGONE

It is most enterprising of Sir Laurence Olivier to complete his Old Vic season with a modern French play and it is gratifying that the enterprise should be remarkably successful. Anouilh's *Antigone* is not just Sophocles's *Antigone* done in modern dress and language, and to approach it as if it were is to invite misunderstanding. It is something quite different, a contemporary treatment of the Antigone myth. For French dramatists have maintained up to the present day the practice of rehandling the classical myths, a practice they derive from the Ancients themselves. There does not happen to be a surviving *Antigone* by Euripides or Aeschylus: but if there were, each would be as different from the Sophocles version as Racine's would be from Corneille's, or Cocteau's from Anouilh's.

Anouilh's *Antigone* was first performed in 1944 during the Occupation. And that, no doubt, explains the choice of theme. As a symbolic figure Antigone is one of the first of the Protestants who assert the sovereign rights of the individual conscience against unjust laws and tyrannical governments; and in any treatment of the theme the echoes of this struggle are bound to ring. But Anouilh handles the myth with a difference. His version is not High Tragedy. It does not embody the heroic courage of the individual hurling herself against implacable power and invoking, as she goes to her doom, the great terms of vindication, Justice, Conscience, The Moral Law. This Antigone is a small, pale, very young rebel caught in a corner of organised collective society, where she is placed in the position of having to make her individual protest in defiance not of tyranny and oppression, but of the good sense, logic and reasonableness of things-as-they-are.

Her refusal started on what seemed a matter of principle, Creon's edict that the body of one of her defeated brothers should go unburied. She refuses to obey. She buries her brother as an act of protest. And after she has been apprehended a long duologue takes place between her and Creon. This Creon is not a cruel tyrant; he has been called in to restore order in a country which has been devastated by the gang warfare

Look out for MAGPIES!

There's a Magpie in many works and farms hoarding bits of iron and steel that ought to go for scrap. Grab that hoard of his! Get it into the scrap merchant's hands. Disregard his plaintive cry—'You never know when we'll need it!' When we need it most is *now*—for the scrap on which our new machines depend.

This appeal is directed to works and farms only. Transport and other facilities may make it possible to widen this later to cover household and other light iron and steel scrap.

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between his two nephews, Antigone's brothers. He is only anxious to save his niece. He soon shows her that there is really no principle involved at all; she does not really believe the old superstition that an unburied spirit is doomed to wander eternally. Her two brothers were anyhow nothing better than a couple of worthless ruffians. His edict was merely a political expedient necessary in the interests of Law and Order. He is eminently reasonable, but this kind of reason cannot convince her. And if she may not be able to change things-as-they-are, she can at least refuse to conform to them. She can, in the last analysis, refuse to be saved by them and this—against all sense, out of little more, when it is fined down, than an instinctive protest against life as it is—is what she does.

This, then, is the progress of the play, the gradual whittling down, incident by incident, of her moral pretensions. She starts as Antigone, with all the prestige and associations of that name and that position, and she ends a frightened girl in the charge of a beef-faced guard, not knowing any longer why she must die: only knowing that she must. The method of the play is a familiar modern French method. On the one hand contemporary clothes and idiom: on the other the conventions of Classical Tragedy—the Chorus, the Messenger, and so on. This device can be highly self-conscious. (It is always in danger of being so.) The juxtaposition of modern and formal has sometimes been used (by Cocteau, for one) just as an effect in itself, for the shock that it gives, and the effect gained in that case is only *chic*. But here Anouilh seems to me to be using the device legitimately; the dilemma of the individual in a modern state is illuminated and pointed by the ground-bass of the myth.

Even so, only a tactful and sensitive production will keep it from "artiness." And in this respect Sir Laurence's production seems to me wholly successful, much more so than the production I recently saw in Paris. Sir Laurence has had to make certain concessions for an audience who are not used to this kind of thing, and these concessions, in the dresses, the sets, the grouping, are all to the good. Then again Sir Laurence has caught exactly and kept true from start to finish the tonal values. As in some contemporary painting, success here depends almost wholly on tone; one false note, one exaggerated or misplaced accent, would throw the whole thing out.

But whereas over-emphasis would be fatal, under-emphasis, though it weakens is fortunately not disastrous. The part of Antigone is not a great emotional part, as I have indicated; but it does really require an emotional intensity, a fanaticism which Miss Vivien Leigh does not command; and since this fanaticism is something that we should find a difficulty at any time in sympathising with, this leaves Creon and the directly political issues in fuller possession of the field than they should really be. Luckily Mr. George Relph is equal to the occasion. His Creon is a type of which our recent history has given us several examples. A peer probably, devout Church of England certainly, Eton and Oxford, a staunch member of the Liberal party, who at a crisis joined a National Government and emerged from it a Conservative. If he had not been a politician he might easily have been an Archbishop at a time of constitutional crisis; or if he hadn't taken orders, he might have been the headmaster of one of our two most famous public schools and have given a series of talks on Sundays after the news on Freedom and Order, performing a wonderful feat of balance with the two terms. An admirable performance, which enormously helps the transference of the play into English. The translation by Lewis Galantière is excellent, and I only regret an addition to the last speech of the chorus (excellent taken, by the way, with just the right inflection of dry menace by Sir Laurence Olivier)—an addition which rather too obviously thumps the political moral.

T. C. WORSLEY

RADIO NOTES

OF all B.B.C. programmes those which most consistently achieve what they set out to do are undoubtedly the broadcasts to schools. The reason is obvious enough. The ordinary radio producer or speaker is working pretty much in the dark; he has, except in certain programmes, mainly of music and variety, no guaranteed audience. But the producer of schools broadcasts, is in direct contact with his listeners; he knows precisely the nature and age of the audience to which his programme is directed. If he under-estimates or over-estimates the understanding of his listeners he will very soon hear about it; and the result of this close collaboration between audience and broadcasters is the most generally efficient service that the B.B.C. puts out. But following Schools broadcasting very nearly in this respect, and for similar reasons, are the Forces Educational Broadcasts. These daily programmes in the Light Programme are always good and often important; as an instance, the series *The Press and the People*, which began this week with a survey of the history of newspapers by Mr. David Keir, may be quoted. And in recent weeks I have gained pleasure and, I have no doubt, advantage from the regular talks on science and English; if I am still inarticulate on the telephone, still send telegrams which are ambiguous, and am still unable adequately to take the chair at a public meeting, it is certainly not the fault of the Forces Educational Broadcasts. The educational value of such programmes goes without saying. They are also, one hopes, training young people to listen to the wireless with some degree of concentration. But what interests me at the moment is that they are unquestionably listened to regularly by a great many people who, from the point of view of the B.B.C., are eavesdropping. Their influence is therefore probably much wider than is primarily intended. But since the great majority of licence-holders can only listen during the evening it seems to me that many Schools and Forces programmes could be repeated.

Mr. Mark Benney, if I am not mistaken, is a newcomer to radio writing. His feature, *Tich*, a study in juvenile delinquency, had many virtues, and its defect was the result of those virtues. The dialogue, the dramatic episodes, were really admirably written; with a minimum of fuss Mr. Benney created a real character in Tich and a real situation which were continually absorbing; so much so, that one resented the intrusion of the narration, whose function here was very much to point the moral and adorn the tale. But Mr. Benney's tale needed no adorning. There was, in other words, a conflict within the script between its quality as imaginative writing and its purpose as documentary. The part of Tich was beautifully played by Roy Carr: I do not remember a more convincing small boy on the air.

In a week of real intellectual distinction in the Third Programme—it included a reading of Mr. Auden's *The Age of Anxiety* and the first two talks of Professor D. M. MacKinnon's series *The Crisis of Reason*, a most exciting attempt to rescue ethics from both the logical positivists and the existentialists—the three dialogues from the *Operette Morali* of Leopardi, translated by Mr. Henry Reed, made a very distinguished programme indeed. It is not often one is given the pleasure of hearing a European masterpiece for the first time, and the beauty and comprehensive scope of Leopardi's mind were superbly impressive. Mr. Reed's brief introduction to the dialogues was a model of its kind.

WILLIAM SALTER

Company Meeting

F. W. WOOLWORTH & CO.

RECORD SALES.

The fortieth annual general meeting of F. W. Woolworth and Co., Ltd., will be held in London on March 4.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Mr. B. E. Uffindell, on the accounts for 1948:—

All things considered I feel that the trading result for the year under review may be regarded, to say the least, as satisfactory, and is entirely due to the very excellent work and loyalty of the company's entire staff, both in the stores and offices, together with the loyal support and collaboration, initiative and enterprise of the company's many suppliers. Supplies and variety of goods have been easier, but in many cases are by no means unrestricted.

We have during the past year been able to make our stores somewhat more presentable by minor alterations, painting, and in many of our stores by improving staff amenities. We should like to do much more, but under present difficulties our activities in this direction are, as you will appreciate, restricted by licences, permits, &c.

Your company still has 13 stores entirely out of operation, due to enemy action during the war, for which we have been unable to obtain permits to rebuild or to operate on a temporary accommodation basis. Ten stores destroyed during the war are also operating on a restricted scale in temporary accommodation.

TAX BURDENS

Purchase tax remains the main cause of the continuance of the high prices of many goods. It places a further burden on incomes which have already been depleted by direct taxation, and is also one of the causes of demands for increased wages.

We all appreciate that taxes, and heavy taxes, are necessary under present conditions, but they can be so heavy as to defeat their own object. Some easement of the present tax burden is needed if new life is to be infused into effort and enterprise. Should the Government reduce either direct or indirect taxation they will get their reward by increased production and benefit of taxation on the higher earnings, which should result from increased turnover, whether for export or the home trade.

Sales figures attained during 1948 create a record in the history of the company, despite difficulties of trading, and far surpassed the record volume set up for 1947. Net profits before taxation also create a new record for the company, though not, of course, to such an extent as the sales record, by reason of the lower margin of profit at which your company traded for the year under review.

Net profits after taxation are not a record; this item was exceeded for each of the years from 1936 to 1939. In keeping with Government wishes, no increase in ordinary dividend or bonus is proposed, though it is to be hoped more freedom will be accorded private enterprise in the near future as an incentive to further effort.

The work of your company's staff is backed up by loyal, efficient, and enterprising suppliers, and results prove that we have the goodwill and confidence of the consumer public. There are, and undoubtedly will continue to be, difficulties to be surmounted. Nevertheless, I take an optimistic view of 1949 prospects.

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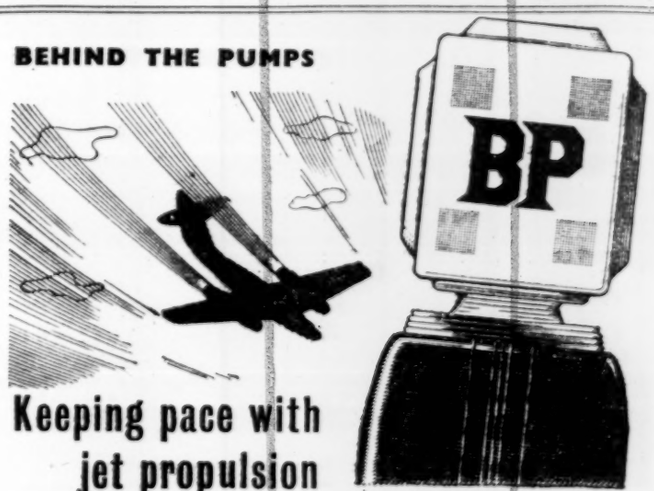

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THE MOVIES

"Unfaithfully Yours," at the New Gallery and the Tivoli
"Le Visiteur," at Studio One

A new Preston Sturges film is an event, and one for which we have had to wait a long time. After an almost Chaplinesque deliberation, "produced, directed and written" by the master, here at last it is. While the titles go up we watch again a scene in the background; nothing more exciting, this time, than a symphony orchestra with the conductor's back facing us. However, a theme has been announced; the concert hall and the conductor will play an important part in the story; and we are promised music by Rossini, Wagner and Tchaikovsky. Then the opening shot proper introduces an airport, with Mr. Rudy Vallee, whose pince-nez and lama-like imperviousness were the joy of *Palm Beach Story*, again making play with woolly calm and eye-glasses. He and others inquire about an overdue plane. The scene is repetitious and a good deal less funny than it should be, though it ends perfectly with the plane being signalled and Mr. Vallee's remark to cover any situation, "That's one thing about aeroplanes, they always come to ground."

For half an hour or more we are teased with the thought, "old material, but not enough of the old fun," so slowly, not to say tediously—as though Mr. Sturges had to break the ice of his long silence—is the situation built up. Mr. Rex Harrison in the meanwhile has become familiar as a knighted conductor enjoying a Shavian taste for rhetoric, a beautiful wife (Linda Darnell), hopeless relatives, and the wonderfully idiotic riches of a flat in which musical clocks twitter and chirr and rows of painted books conceal the doors to the cocktail bar. But, as I have remarked, these points are made with a thinly elegant deliberation—not at all with the shocking impudence we have come to treasure. Many, many moments had passed, and jokes been ventured, before the first irrepressible laugh came; sitting on a plush bench, Mr. Vallee produced a pocket-book which suddenly unzipped its secrets in a series of little expert howls. After that the fun increased considerably, though to the end I couldn't help feeling that it was fun rationed, and that every piece of fooling had to be beautifully snipped out and handed over.

But if *Unfaithfully Yours* is the least spontaneous and romantic of Mr. Sturges's films, it is also unquestionably the most neatly plotted. I shall not reveal the intricacies of day-dreaming that are woven round the conductor's jealous suspicions of his wife, but they are brilliantly devised and carried out, and the more one thinks about the construction (the weakest point of his earlier pieces) the more one is bound to admire it. I wish I could say that, retrospectively, I had enjoyed the film rather more because of these merits; but the fact remains that, to see and enjoy, *Unfaithfully Yours* lags handsomely but some little way behind *Sullivan's Travels*, *Palm Beach Story*, and *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek*.

Le Visiteur (directed by Jean Dreville) is a slow, sentimental piece about a murderer who hides his identity in an orphanage and becomes its hero: the kind of film that, in English or American hands, would lead to intolerable falsities. I don't know that I very firmly believe in *Le Visiteur*, but it has a charm, the singing voices are sweet, and all the children from the ragamuffin who throws a knife, to the self-conscious discoverer of the murderer's secret, act delightfully. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

At the Redfern. Michael Rothenstein: Humphrey Spender

Mr. Rothenstein's gouaches, monotypes, water-colours—and some of his pictures surely combine all three—take their place in what the French now call our Romantic Revival. Certainly Sutherland, Colquhoun, Minton and, further off, Klee and Chagall, have all made visible contributions to Mr. Rothenstein's imagery. But that is all right: these compositions stand easily, even elegantly, on their own feet. Thorn trees; butterflies; crowing cocks; dark skies with crescent moons above and dark church steeples below; fantastic ploughs, like monsters, which loom, lurching, through a perpetual owl-light; silent stricken figures of boys or women (easily the least animate of the objects in this landscape)—all are built into effective designs. Mr. Rothenstein's sense of his media never fails: and occasionally there is a tension which transforms what is always a highly decorative organisation into a vehicle of drama: number 95, for instance.

Mr. Spender's new paintings and monotypes do not fit into the Romantic movement just indicated; but they are nonetheless English, or Romantic. A wistful fantasy in his case renders hills, houses or cut-glass decanters and vases equally toylike. The design of his pictures is flat in its implications as well as being what might be expressed as "too even in tempo." The relation of the forms is over-simple: the objects are dotted about the picture-space too equally, so that overlapping of different forms is reduced to a minimum. With structural organisation thus practically eliminated as a source of excitement, these paintings depend for their effect upon an elaboration both of textures and of the actual shapes of individual objects, which become—*in themselves*—quite intricate. The textures Mr. Spender contrives are suggestive of fractured glass; or snippets of Cellophane, of different colours, overlaid one on another. Occasionally these tiny facets of pretty colour become plastically operative as definitive planes. But mostly they are simply a means for breaking up the picture-surface—a means of decorative effect.

Contemporary Music

The Suffolk Galleries were full for the London Contemporary Music Centre's latest concert, although the programme consisted mainly of string trios. Why do composers insist on writing string trios? Once in a way a masterpiece results; more often, we are conscious of strain and difficulty: none of the instruments can take a rest for long without causing an awkwardness. In a string duo the spareness, clarity and ingenuity are evidently pointful, but a trio seems constantly to aspire towards the status of a string quartet; it remains a substitute, like three-handed bridge. Neither Robin Orr, nor R. W. Wood, nor the Belgian Jean Absil, succeeded altogether in overcoming these inherent difficulties; each trio had interesting features, but the total effect remained grey. What accounted for the crowds was more probably the prospect of hearing something new from Britten and Poulenc. Britten's five lullabies, though only chips from his workshop, held attention by invariably good craftsmanship and occasionally beautiful ideas; well sung by Nancy Evans, they aroused the strong wish to hear again another song which is one of the most beautiful and profound of Britten's recent productions, his setting of the *Canticle* of Francis Quarles. The Poulenc novelty was *The Tale of Babar:* Jean de Brunhoff's famous story was declaimed (amusingly) by Bruce Belfrage, while the composer supplied an intermittent piano commentary *à la* Corney Grain. Unlike M. de Brunhoff, he seems to think of elephants mainly as heavy, clumsy, positively violent creatures; the family joke is too little stylish to survive publication. Saint-Saëns had just the delicate touch for this kind of thing; and he, it may be remembered, refused to allow public performances of the charming *Carnaval des Animaux* until after his death. To-day, nothing seems too trivial for the most advanced of listeners; the calculation was correct, for the audience was plainly delighted.

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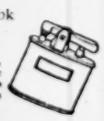

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Correspondence

INDEPENDENT FILMS

SIR,—In certain quarters the present crisis in the British film industry has been put down to the extravagance of film producers. Because I feel this only a contributory cause of the crisis may I set out what I believe to be the major reasons for it?

The root cause of the trouble (and indeed of the monotonously recurrent crises in the industry here) was dealt with by Ernest Betts in your last issue, when he says that of every 1*s.* taken at the box-office only 1½*d.* is returned to the producer. This figure has been quoted elsewhere at 2½*d.*, but 2¼*d.* is the figure for an entire cinema programme. The actual proportion of a 1*s.* returned to the producer of the first feature varies between these two figures, and it is obviously uneconomic for the man who takes all, or nearly all, of the risk to receive in return such a small proportion of the proceeds. The exhibitors may protest in reply that their expenses are high, but I can only say that I have never heard of a film exhibitor going bankrupt.

The second cause of the crisis is due to excessive optimism in the past over our prospects in foreign markets—particularly in the American market. This led to costly type films with high budgets made in anticipation of even higher receipts. While these in the main have not materialised, I think insufficient credit has been given to Mr. Rank for acquiring interest in chains of cinemas throughout the Commonwealth, in order to build up markets for British films abroad. British films are certainly taking far more money in the countries of the Commonwealth than they have ever done before, and, as I discovered first-hand on a visit to Australia, they enjoy very considerable popularity. The great disappointment has been the American market. Hopes in this field have not by any means lived up to expectations.

The third reason is extravagance on the part of certain producers in the past, from which we are now suffering the financial backwash.

The fourth, and what I believe to be the more immediate reason for the crisis is a little complex. For the better part of a year, American films were withdrawn from this market as a counter-measure to the 75 per cent. tax. This meant a piling up of American films. Under the present arrangement the American companies are only permitted to take £4,000,000 out of this country annually. Does it not stand to reason that, when all these Companies have a number of films waiting to be shown here, and when they can only take out of the country a limited amount of money, that they will compete amongst themselves to obtain the largest proportion of this sum?

If this is the case, would it not appear that in order to get their pictures booked they will rent them on cheaper terms than would ordinarily be the case? The British producer of first features cannot afford to reduce his terms. Thus a first-class American feature can be booked at a considerably lower figure than an equivalent British film. But is there not a 45 per cent. quota which ensures the booking of British films? I suggest it might be enlightening to inquire into the number of independent film exhibitors (who in bulk are responsible for a considerable percentage of British film receipts) who have defaulted on their quota, or have applied for exemption from quota. It would seem unlikely that there are not enough British films available since the major circuits are easily able to fulfil their larger quota obligations. But, even supposing independent exhibitors neither default nor apply for exemption they are surely in a position to drive the hardest bargains with the renters of British films.

I don't know to what extent one should blame the British film exhibitors if this is their attitude. I suppose as business men if they can book an American film of box-office value for, say, 25 per cent. they are naturally going to resist booking a British film with similar values for say 40 per cent. Of course, if the British film industry closed down completely, and there was no protective legislation, they might then have to pay 50 per cent. or more for American films because there would no longer be any competition. But then British film exhibitors have never been a very far-sighted fraternity. While these conditions persist it is a pretty dismal outlook for British film producers; particularly independent film producers.

78 Park Street, W.1. FRANK LAUNDER

CARDINAL MINDSZENTY

SIR,—I hope your readers may hear your voice raised in protest against the hysteria surrounding the trial of Cardinal Mindszenty. Collecting the facts of the matter solely from the reports in *The Times*, it would seem pretty clear that the accused was in fact guilty of the offences charged. That, indeed, was not surprising when one considers that he appears to have been in the nature of a medieval political priest, the basis of whose life was to oppose the Communist government of his country. Yet, because he is a priest, to charge and convict him is called persecution, without, it would seem, any regard for what he has done.

As for the confession he is alleged to have made: is the mere fact that he made a "confession" sufficient ground for saying that he was drugged? I would not put it past any Communist government to use improper methods in a political trial, but in this case improper methods do not seem to have been needed.

Even if the trial did have some unsatisfactory features to English eyes, how can it be expected that people with a history like the Hungarians should jump into English nineteenth-century Liberalism overnight?

In joining in the general protests about this matter, protests led by the Vatican, I suggest that our Government is running a serious danger of making a fool of itself, and has chosen some very bad company.

One comfort to be derived from the affair is, perhaps, that it appears to have brought the Roman Church out on the side of free speech.

7 King's Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.4. STEPHEN MURRAY

DIVIDED IRELAND

SIR,—As an Ulsterman I was deeply interested in Mr. Shearman's letter. His insistence that the Ulster Unionist Party is on the Left Wing of British Conservatism deserves some examination. Admittedly, they have frequently, on the larger issues of social legislation, moved parallel to or at the heels of H.M. Government in Britain. They have, in one or two matters, made excellent advances of their own: the establishment of the Housing Trust and of the T.B. Authority may be cited as examples. They have also now and then deliberately lagged behind Westminster, as in the failure to repeal the Trades Disputes Act.

This broad and marked parallelism is, of course, due in part to the by now traditional step-by-step policy very wisely laid down by Lord Craigavon, but more emphatically it is due to the fact that the Tories have been forced into it in order to preserve the reality of our inclusion within the United Kingdom. Thus the results of the recent General Election, while a clear declaration of our preference for a Protestant Monarchy to a Roman Catholic Republic, were also a demonstration of our general desire to cling to those standards of life which have been maintained or raised by the Labour Government at Westminster.

But when candidates of the same Unionist Party become Members of Parliament at Westminster for Unionist constituencies they are indistinguishable from the Right Wing of British Conservatism. Professor Savory is no Radical by any standard.

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THE CHAMPION OF CLOTHS THE CLOTH OF CHAMPIONS

Hence we have the anomaly of British Governmental legislation being attacked furiously at Westminster, only to be enacted after a short interval by members of exactly the same party at Stormont.

This absurdity will become more and more obvious in the future.

What seems really serious to a conscientious democrat is that in Ulster we have experienced a failure of essential democratic machinery; not, in all fairness, entirely the responsibility of the Unionists. Democracy in action implies the existence of an opposition which is a potential alternative to the party in office. In Ulster the Nationalists have no concrete social policy, they draw their support from a relatively stable sectarian minority, and can never, on that basis, offer themselves as an adequate alternative to the Unionist Government. The Labour Party, unable to define its attitude with any unanimity, has shown only a capacity for splintering.

What ought to have happened for our political health was that the Unionist bloc should have been allowed naturally to evolve into two parties, prepared to differ honestly on domestic issues, to coalesce if any real threat to our Constitutional position should occur. One of these might reasonably have become a Farmers' and Workers' Party, the other representing the large landowners and industrial employers.

Thus the democratic circulation might have been maintained instead of the present congestion and threatened apoplexy. In justice, it must be remarked that one member at least of the present Stormont Government has shown obvious signs of appreciating the dilemma into which numerical success has led the Conservatives.

JOHN HEWITT

CZECH RADIOS

SIR,—Critic wrote: "As soon as this (the story about radio sets in Czechoslovakia) was printed, the Czech Legation in London issued a categorical denial. I cannot find any reference to this denial in the *Daily Herald*." In his reply, Mr. Cudlipp states: "I should like your readers to know that we did, on January 25th, publish the Czech Ministry of Information's denial of this report." Critic was correct: the *Daily Herald* did not publish the official denial of the Czechoslovak Embassy, and has not yet done so, although this was made available to all British newspapers through Press Agencies in London. Further, the *Daily Herald* has no correspondent in Prague and merely stated, ". . . Our correspondent quoted the Vienna *Tageszeitung*, which stated that the announcement had been made by the Czech Minister of the Interior."

Incidentally, this is not the only baseless story about Czechoslovakia to appear in the British press recently. The *Daily Telegraph*, on February 7th, published an article on their front page, under the heading, "Czech Army Officers in Purge," the opening sentence of which was as follows: "The Czech Communist newspaper *Rudé Právo* announced yesterday that all officers in the Czech Army who formerly fought with the Western Powers have now been removed." Not only is there no truth in this story, but the quotation alleged to be from *Rudé Právo* never appeared in that paper.

It may be of some interest to note that both the article in the *Daily Herald* and the one in the *Daily Telegraph* were reported by these newspapers' correspondents in Vienna.

Czechoslovak Embassy. P. KAVAN

JOHN LILBURNE

SIR,—Dr. Schenk's comment on my article about Lilburne and the Levellers stresses some aspects of a rather complicated problem, which I, for reasons of space, ignored. I do not doubt that Lilburne, when he was scourged and pilloried, "saw himself as a Protestant martyr." I would even go further. Once or twice in his life he believed, as both King Charles and Cromwell did, that he was acting under the direct inspiration of God. What I meant to convey was that his interest shifted from religious questions, which preoccupied him as a youngster of 23, to the "secular" (i.e., political) issues which absorbed him during the rest of his active life down to his last imprisonment. The anti-clericalism which he shared with all the Leveller leaders, whether it was directed against bishops or Presbyterian divines, was to my thinking at bottom "secular." It was inspired by their dread of all personal authority, and was of a piece with their demand that all magistrates should be elected and should serve for one year only. I thought that Miss Gibbs in her biography of Lilburne, a book as scrupulously objective as it is sympathetic, had unduly stressed his religious outlook, when she described him in her title as a "Christian democrat." Certainly he was a Christian, who never felt a doubt. But when I read his attacks on the arrogance of the Long Parliament and the usurpation of Cromwell, I cannot feel that his reasons for detesting dictatorship and militarism differ from my own, and I am an agnostic. In other words, democracy for him was based on ethics, though he could reinforce his reasoning by quoting the Scriptures.

I feel the same discomfort when Dr. Schenk insists on labelling Walwyn a "Christian humanist," though the phrase is perfectly accurate. For Christianity in his century was still an intolerant and persecuting religion. Walwyn and the Levellers stood above all else for toleration. He simplified his Christianity into a single commandment, "that we should love as Christ hath loved." He then went on (if we may assume his authorship of the *Vanity of the Present Churches*) to deny that any other "doctrines" are necessary or salutary, and swept away with contempt all the dogmatic subtleties of "the traders in divine things." The sceptical, questioning, Socratic side of this powerful and original mind was as pronounced as his faith in love. Dr. Schenk's reminder that Overton was an Anabaptist does not dispose of my contention that he was a rationalist in outlook. There was, in spite of their emotional instability, a vein of rationalism in most of the branches and descendants of this interesting and sympathetic sect, including the Quakers. Overton, as he stated in the *Picture of the Council of State*, wrote a book entitled *God's Word confirmed by His Works*, which evidently was an early essay in the reconciliation of Science and Revelation. He was, therefore, rationalist enough to think it important that the Scriptures should agree with what we know of "things visible."

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH

SIR,—Jacquetta Hawkes, in her article on the Poets' Fountain last week, makes no mention of Shakespeare's bust and memorial so charmingly situated in the tiny garden of St. Mary's, Aldermanbury (near Moorgate station), the church Shakespeare always attended when he was in London with his friends and fellow-players Hemminge and Condell from the Globe, who were responsible for the first collected edition of Shakespeare, the famous First Folio of 1623. There is nothing "bogus" connected with St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, and it is the only place where the pilgrim can be sure he is treading in the actual footsteps of Shakespeare.

I see that the Bishop of London's Committee on the City Churches does not recommend that Shakespeare's church should be restored. I went to visit it again a few months ago. The church seemed practically destroyed but the curious Victorian statue with its long inscriptions still stood under the trees in its little garden with people resting on the benches round it. I do hope that the City Lands Committee (or whoever in the City deals with such matters) will do something to preserve a pleasant memorial on this spot where Shakespeare undoubtedly worshipped and near which lived the two worthy players to whom the world owes the preservation of all that the word "Shakespeare" stands for. Also I should like to recommend it to Jacquetta Hawkes as a quaint Victorian survival well worthy of her "personal affection."

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is hard to admire any nation, but it is impossible to admire the British: it is also unnecessary, they do that for themselves. Consider some of their worst characteristics: they are quiet, calm, reserved, modest, self-reliant, practical, orderly and kind; among the educated, one finds many who are brilliant talkers. These are not qualities that recommend one people to another. For what is quietness but conceit? What is calm but complacency or even insolence? Reserve is plainly the desire to snub. Modesty is but the disguise of slyness, self-reliance indicates an indifference to others; the practical strain, stolidity; orderliness, fear; the very kindness of the British is a means of destroying people. As for the clever who would distract the stranger from these fatal defects of character, they belong to the privileged official group and are the hypocritical beneficiaries of the Imperial system. So much for the character of the English; but what about their actions in the world? Here we come upon the worst. Unlike other nations, the British pursue and actually defend their own interests; the Americans and Russians, for example, have never done such a thing in their lives. All this will be obvious to anyone who has been on the Continent since the war; but a small incident which I take from Mr. Edmund Wilson's *Europe Without Baedeker** will make the point. At some town in Greece he saw an English sentry stamp his feet as he came to attention before his officer. This stamp of the feet indicates to Mr. Wilson two fundamental British traits: the desire to terrorise despised foreign populations by making a noise, and the desire of the British officer class to terrorise the Other Ranks. (Outside Buckingham Palace sentries behave in the same fashion: we believe this is done to terrorise the King and so preserve a constitutional monarchy.)

Such is the undertone of Mr. Edmund Wilson's book. But the anger Mr. Wilson's condescensions have caused seems to me quite out of proportion to the offence, and overlooks the exactness of his impressions of the last phase of the war. They are often very generous—see the long and warm accounts of the theatre in London. But we *did* suffer from claustrophobia. We *were* inclined at that time to be anti-American. As for our "rudeness," Mr. Wilson understands the fundamental belligerence of our good manners very well, as he shows in his brilliant quotations from *Alice in Wonderland;* it is all the more odd that he does not apply his knowledge. When people told him, for example, that we sent out second-rate people to America to do propaganda during the war—which does not seem now to be true—they were not intending to insult America, but were being rude to their own government. It is a permanent conviction of the British that their government is always second-rate. Again, when a don celebrated for his malice, pretended that he had not read Whitman, whom he understood to be popular in South America, and artlessly inquired if the poet was better than Whyte-Melville, he was having heavy learned fun with an admired American critic who is notorious for his Anglophobia. Our wicked animals defend themselves in peculiar ways when they are attacked. But what petty nonsense all this is. English writers have been rude about America, and Americans (Henry Adams and Hawthorne) have been rude in return; if both sides are now getting sensitive, we had better ban travel for writers on the ground that, faster than any other group, they degenerate to the mental age of ten.

For myself, *Europe Without Baedeker* might have been called Europe Without Aspirins, but it is a full, bleakly amusing and stimulating book. An American could complain that it was viciously anti-American. It has the defect of its analytical virtue, the predilections of a mind once brought up on Marxism and scientific history: that is to say, the style is grey, the observations are passive and impassive, and incline to a clinical melancholy and suspicion. The patient comes to the operating table only when he is dying:

> We can contemplate now with equanimity, with a cheerful self-satisfaction, a kind of warfare that crushes whole cities and that brings down agony of death on thousands of women and children.
>
> Yet the long concentration on killing people whom we rarely confront, the suppression of the natural bonds between ourselves and these unseen human creatures, is paid for by repercussions, the spitefulness of fear and stifled guilt, in our immediate relations. Our own world is poisoned now, and we must recognise that outlawing the enemy makes it easy to dislike one's allies.

If Mr. Wilson found London rude, Rome corrupt and Athens provincial, he returned to America to find Americans with faces "insufficiently focussed and their personalities lacking flavour." (What else he says of his own people I hesitate to repeat.) His trouble was that he had left the happy womb of literary criticism and had arrived on the European rubbish heap in the worst year of the war and the first months of peace, the most unreal of contemporary moments, and a sense of personal isolation is on every page. "If you are not careful you will become Sir Osmund Leigh," Edmund Wilson said to a young English friend, pointing to the example of a fatuous official personage who had turned himself into an almost Music Hall version of the British Governor. "And you will become Sir Edmund Gosse" replied the young man. Always one to examine his own symptoms with harsh melancholy, Mr. Edmund Wilson admits the gibe went home. A literary critic is lost in a crowd of uniforms. He was left, in fact, like Smollett (that other disobliging traveller) with his hypochrondria and a skin too few.

If Mr. Wilson is a melancholy traveller, he never loses sight of his business, which is the minute observation of the wear of war upon the interests of civilisation. The book stands by the glinting minuteness of its detail which is composed, like a mosaic, to one theme: both prejudice and insight enrich the pattern. In Crete, how do we look now upon the myth of the Minotaur? If an English girl receives a present Mr. Wilson notices how the war "has intensified to a ravenous voracity the appetite for property of the English"—but surely only for certain necessities? The appetite for possessions has certainly declined—and that in her thanks she aimed at dryness and curtness. (She did not, of course, wish to embarrass him by gush.) If he looks at surrealist pictures in Rome it is to note that surrealism has been overtaken by the war. After two months of the Italians and the British he found it easier to talk to Russian exiles. How gratified they are by Russian imperialism! Before the war the Americans and the Russians had the common ground of provinciality in relation to the people of Western Europe; now Western Europe seems provincial; though I wonder if he would still say, four years on, that "the failure of the Western European nations marked the definitive bankruptcy of old-fashioned nationalist conquest."

> America and Russia, (he says), with all the defects of their civilisations, do constitute more advance systems to the extent that they have succeeded in acquiring, in more or less synthesising, a great variety of kinds of people—so that men find themselves here in a position to think at least about what kind of societies they want, instead of about how they are to manage to maintain themselves as autonomous nations.

For if the British system has preserved certain ideas of devotion to the State and of disinterested intellectual activity, it is swamped by

> adherence to the feudal world which has delayed the equalisation of England in such a way that when it finally arrives, it may produce a dreary mediocrity of groups that have been too long kept under and not allowed to find their own way to self-improvement through the scramble for money and power. This we *have* been able to do in America and my optimistic opinion is that the United States is at the present time more politically advanced than any other part of the world.

Possibly; but the American (who is a continental) has never understood that the pressure under which we have always lived in this small island, is just as fruitful as the equality and unhindered freedom of movement which have been encouraged by American spaciousness. Until we are acclimatised, we find America relaxing.

Rome was hot and corrupt. The armies had brought in mass prostitution, flagrant and perfunctory, on a scale unknown even to the daydreams of guilt-ridden Hecate County; and thieving beyond the dreams of Naples. In Naples itself the American and Italian underworlds united their gifts and added murder. As for hunger, the children stole the food from your very plate as you lifted the fork to your mouth. Yet, the astonishing spiritual resilience of Europe: the great Italian films were being made. The flight to Greece was a relief and would have been a pleasure but for the British and the boots of their sentries. American soldiers apparently called Athens "a real metropolis," by which Mr. Wilson suspects they meant that it had a "certain mediocrity." The monotony of the streets, the prosaic and new quality of the place, suggested "home." Approaching Athens from the air—how eagerly one picks out permanent things from Mr. Wilson's book—the traveller

> is surprised by the difference from Italy, whose dense plantings of parched yellow fields you have so short a time before left behind. Here is a paler, purer, soberer country, which seems both wild and old and quite distinct from anything farther west. The sea is absolutely smooth, sometimes violet sometimes blue, with a softness of water-colour, glistening in patches with a fine grain of silver; and the islands of all sizes in bulbous or oblong shapes—blobs and round-bottomed bottles and the contours of plump roast fowl—seem not to rise out of the water but to be plaqued on it like cuff-links on cuffs or to lie scattered like fragments of a picture-puzzle on a table with a deep blue cover. These islands are a dry terra-cotta—quite unlike the deep earthly clay tints to which one has been accustomed in Italy—almost the colour of too well-cooked liver, and the vegetation looks like grey lichens. The marblings on the looping beaches set up a feeling of uncanny familiarity which refers itself, as one recognises in a moment, to the patterns on the ancient Greek vases made out of this very soil. Even on the large islands and the mainland there are visible little cultivation and few plainly cut ribbons of roads, and the country, after humanised Italy, seems grander and more mysterious. The haze of the fawn-coloured foreground shades farther away into blue, where the mountains stand dim and serene. These are the "shadowy mountains" of Homer.

And you land to get at once a grateful impression of "simplification and gentle austerity."

Mr. Wilson's portraits have a documentary thoroughness. He appreciates a stage Irishman or an old wag like Sir Osmund, but is never deceived about them, and roots them in their proper social and political soil—though I think it would have been wiser of Mr. Wilson to be quite sure that these lunatics were not deceiving him. The portrait of Barmine, the ex-Commissar, is brilliant. There is an excellent picture of Santayana and searching study of Malraux and Silone, and all are done in Mr. Wilson's best manner, which is flat and *policier*, but stuffed with thought. A private detective by disposition, Mr. Wilson sometimes finds his search for the significant taking him into low company, for war brings low company to the top. But his mind is persistently serious, and he was probably annoyed by what Henry Adams called the fundamental unseriousness of the English. In Scotland, on the contrary, he found high company something more like his meat, in the conversation of a philosopher. The talk turned on the use of the word God. "What Kemp Smith called God was, I thought, something mainly identifiable with vigorous physical persistence, a rectitude in relation to others and to one's work in the world, and a faith in the endurance of the human mind." Behind the quickness to feel a slight and the readiness to return it there is an injured gravity of mind.

V. S. Pritchett

* *Europe Without Baedeker.* By Edmund Wilson. *Secker & Warburg.* 15s.

AN IRISH PROLETARIAN

Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well. By SEAN O'CASEY. *Macmillan.* 16s.

The fourth and last volume in Mr. O'Casey's record of his Irish experiences, which this time include the Troubles and the Abbey Theatre, again throws much light both on Ireland and on O'Casey. There are many very good things in it and some pretty bad ones, but even the latter are illuminating; this man who brought something new and virile into the modern theatre remains for better or worse a creator. He may be unjust, but he is sincere; he may be naive, but he is alive; he may sow with the whole sack, but it is his own sack. He is the most powerful "proletarian" writer we have, one who, in his own words, "would ever preserve, ever wear—*though he would never flaunt it*—the tattered badge of his tribe." (I query merely the clause that I have italicised.) He tells us that his Irish critics in the Twenties accused him of "exploiting the poor," a judgment which illustrates not only the well-known malice of the Dublin intelligentsia, but also their cowardice when faced with uncomfortable facts. O'Casey, who says truly that "there were few things in Dublin more conventional than the boastful, free-and-easy manners of its bohemianism," is no respecter either of conventions or of persons.

This refusal to compromise is both his strength and his weakness. There is perhaps no other writer of his calibre using the English language to-day who shows less self-criticism and self-discipline. Incorrigibly slap-dash he often here, as elsewhere, travesties his own profoundest feelings and perceptions by a kind of writing which belongs to a twopence-coloured novelette. A plethora of ready-made epithets such as third-rate writers use to make poignant what they do not feel, is found in O'Casey obscuring his intensest feelings of what is most poignant by its nature. And this over-emphasis and crudity of style are linked, as they are in Dickens, with a major flaw—a flaw of the intellect—which can only be called sentimentality. This is not, of course, the sentimentality of someone who fakes his feelings; it is that of the muddled crusader who lacks a sense of proportion. O'Casey in his earlier days was labelled a realist, and still calls himself a rationalist, but he is, in fact, a romantic. Only a romantic could indict the Roman Catholic Church for its interference with freedom of thought and of discussion and, almost in the same breath, utter a hymn to the Red Star which beats the lushest of orthodox hymnographers on their own ground.

To see the world in terms of sheep, all white or all red, and of goats as black as top hats or a priest's robes is an asset perhaps to a prophet or pamphleteer, but is not what we expect from a dramatist. And a distinction is apparent between O'Casey the dramatist and O'Casey the dithyrambist. The characters of his earlier plays emerge as individuals—neither black nor white but multi-coloured as in life. When keeping his eye on the people he knew he had ample scope for those surprises so characteristic of life and so necessary to a dramatist. Bessie Burgess in *The Plough and the Stars* behaves very oddly—but truly. The recognition of such human inconsistency gives a dramatist two things he needs—irony and concentration. It is the sheep-and-goaters, not those who see life as complex, who lose themselves in verbosity. O'Casey throughout his autobiography alternates between irony and naivety, between concentration and diffuseness. "Do the insurance companies pay if a man is shot after curfew?" That one line from *The Shadow of a Gunman* is worth pages of slogan-plugging, and O'Casey can still tap that vein when he lets the people speak—not the masses nor the megaphones, but the people whom that phrase, "the masses," disembodies. The best thing in this new book is a chapter called *The Raid*: here again is a *multum in parvo* of tangled emotions and issues, here again the ironic pay-off that lifts reporting into tragedy. This chapter would make a magnificent one-act play.

O'Casey at his best, then, writes about real people but we should not, even in his earlier work, simply label him "realist." Mr. Sean O'Faolain has recently done so ("*unassuaged* realism" was his phrase), contrasting him with Synge, but the two playwrights have much in common. An early critique by F. R. Higgins, though quoted with resentment by O'Casey, touches at least on the other half of the truth in suggesting that the Dublin plays show "a technique based on the revue structure." The prominence in the plays of song, of tags of poetry and of incantatory speech, is, like Synge's over-packing of imagery, at least an "assuagement" of realism. Irish peasants do use striking imagery and Dublin slum-dwellers do sing songs in the most unlikely circumstances but both Synge and O'Casey have greatly strengthened the mixture—and quite right too; they are dramatists. But the ingredients *were* drawn fom life, from a particular life; it was when O'Casey left the Dublin scene that, in such sentimental plays as *Within the Gates* or *Oak Leaves and Lavender*, he got the ingredients themselves wrong. It should be added that this declared Communist and rationalist has always been obsessed with religion. Thus both his last two books have been dedicated to the memory of Maynooth professors. These two Roman Catholic teachers were to some extent rebels within the fold but what goes on in that fold seems to fascinate this Dublin Protestant turned Communist. And the Catholic butler in his latest play remains more genuinely eloquent than the butler's Communist son. In *Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well* nothing could be more bitter than the attacks, sometimes merited, on the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland but as usual, when he starts to propagandise, O'Casey spoils his case by over-simplifying. It is too easy a score to set Stalin's *Life of Lenin* against Sir Joseph Glynn's *Life of Matt Talbot* (the Dublin labourer who was beatified for wearing cart chains next his skin.)

Compared with O'Casey's previous autobiographical books this final movement is monochrome and sober. He has here abandoned—and it is no great loss—his Finneganese Without Tears but he has also all but abandoned those flights into wild satirical fantasy which so distinguished *Drums Beneath the Windows*—such astonishing pieces of writing as *The Song of a Shift* (on the repercussions of Synge's *Playboy*) or the dialogue between St. Patrick and St. Laurence O'Toole or the apocalyptic picture of the madhouse. Still, this last volume has plenty of bitter humour, at its best when the commentary is made in character and through dialogue:

> You see, it's this way: if Document No. 2 gets accepted, Ireland'll be what you could call a sequestered country that is still within the outlines of the British Empire.
>
> —I don't much like the sayin' of within the outlines of the British Empire, and I don't altogether like the word sequestered either.
>
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As for the Abbey Theatre he gives a slapstick picture of the riot over *The Plough and the Stars* when Barry Fitzgerald knocked someone into the stalls and Yeats "stormed in utter disregard of all around him . . . as he conjured up a vision for them of O'Casey on a cloud, with Fluther on his right hand and Rosie Redmond on his left, rising upwards to Olympus," etc., etc. This satirical gift, however, is sometimes abused as in the long and laboured attack on A.E.—though we should be grateful that he also includes a long panegyric on Lady Gregory. Sheep and goats—here we are again but that is O'Casey, take him or leave him. And those who like a writer to have guts and loyalties, those who prefer a river however muddy to a pool however ornamental, those who are interested in living words or living workers or the still living Ireland, should certainly take him.

LOUIS MACNEICE

MOZART ANALYSED

Mozart's Piano Concertos. By C. M. GIRDLESTONE. *Cassell.* 25s.

The noble tradition of twentieth-century Mozartian scholarship (Abert, Einstein, Emily Anderson, Wyzéwa and Saint-Foix) is worthily maintained by Professor Girdlestone's penetrating and very well written monograph on the piano concertos. It first appeared in two volumes, in Paris, in French, and in the middle of the war: an unfavourable combination of circumstances for an author whose name was previously unfamiliar in musical circles; but its quality was quickly realised by those who came across it, and Messrs. Cassell are to be congratulated on this handsomely produced 500-page volume, in which the English text has lost none of the urbanity which distinguished the original.

To general considerations of origin, structure and layout Mr. Girdlestone devotes 70 pages, followed by a detailed stylistic examination, with copious musical quotations, of each of the 23 piano concertos. These analyses, often running to twenty or thirty pages apiece, though not at all pedantic, are so packed with detail that they cannot be profitably read without a score, or at least a gramophone recording—and there are still, unfortunately, several concertos which have been neither recorded nor cheaply reprinted. If we follow the author carefully through one of the concertos with which we suppose ourselves reasonably familiar, we are likely to be amazed at the number of structural niceties and fine points of workmanship which we have always ignored or taken for granted, and are now invited to admire. I mean this in no ironical sense. It is true that the pitfall which awaits analytical criticism of masterpieces is an excess of enthusiasm over detail, a determination to be surprised by the most ordinary modulation, or to discover profundities in the smallest differences which occur when previously heard material is restated. Not even the best of Mozartian scholars is wholly free from this amiable failing; and it is possible that every now and again Mr. Girdlestone's readers will think that he is "making too much of" a transition or an episode. But we should wonder, first, whether it is not our own insensitivity that is at fault. The ears of the modern listener, accustomed to every extremity of dissonance and opulence of colour, have largely lost the capacity for feeling those passing shocks of pleasure which small modifications of the normal classical procedure are intended to provoke. Scholars, on the other hand, soaked in the music of one period, become exceptionally aware of such felicities, and some at least of their heightened awareness can be passed on, in books like this, to the reader; such, at any rate, has been my own experience.

Enthusiastic admirer as he is, Mr. Girdlestone is not uncritical: indeed, he comes down rather heavily against certain lightweight works of pure entertainment, among them the charming D major *Rondo* for piano and orchestra (K 382), which he calls "mediocre and frivolous" because it replaced a more serious finale to Mozart's earliest piano concerto in the same key; and the heavenly *Haffner Serenade*, which he goes out of his way to attack twice—almost unpardonably, I can't help feeling. The close attention paid to a great many other works besides the piano concertos makes the book, in effect, a conspectus of Mozart's spiritual and technical development during the last eighteen years of his brief career; and the masterly series itself does indeed make the ideal scaffolding for such an account, for the piano concerto played a central part in Mozart's life, equivalent to that of the piano sonata in Beethoven's. Not only, as the author remarks, did Mozart "enrich the concerto form with a greater number of masterpieces than any other of the great composers," but no other department of his own work "shows quite so abundant a succession of masterpieces." These claims, though large, are not excessive; but does not the author go too far in deciding that only the last four of the symphonies can be called great? "Great" is an imprecise term; but I should have thought that the *Linz* Symphony, the early C major, the *Haffner* and even the *Paris* were masterpieces in their own sphere equal to all but the supreme piano concertos. Mr. Girdlestone shows a similar bias in his tendency to underrate the works of Mozart's extreme youth; as when he remarks that "most of what he wrote before eighteen is not more valuable than the sonatinas which Beethoven, it is said, composed at twelve." Roughly speaking, the first 200 numbers of the Köchel catalogue were written before Mozart was eighteen; among them, again and again, we come across Divertimenti and other instrumental and vocal music of an incomparable tenderness, grace and freshness of fancy—incomparable, because not altogether recaptured even in the profounder works of his maturity.

But I do not wish to appear captious about a book which has given me, as it must give to every lover of Mozart's genius, great satisfaction and enjoyment. Both timely and admirable, for example, is Mr. Girdlestone's final chapter, which discusses the style in which Mozart should be performed.

> There are two common forms of bad Mozart playing. One consists in making him graceful, elegant and gentle; the other lively and dashing . . .
>
> One of the mannerisms of those who cultivate this [the dashing] style consists in giving rising scales a kind of push by putting down the loud pedal at the beginning and emphasising the last note with a sforzando, thanks to which the scale goes off like the uncorking of a bottle . . .
>
> In reality, no single style is peculiar to Mozart. His music should be played as it is and the pianist should be like it, vigorous, graceful, delicate, merry, witty, sombre, sparkling, deep in turn, and always clear. Clarity is the one quality which is always in season . . .

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I wish that not only all pianists, but all singers, and especially all conductors, could be induced to read and ponder these final pages. They go to the heart of a problem of style which seems to grow more acute as the eighteenth century recedes further into the distance.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

AMERICAN COMMENTARY

The American Democracy. By HAROLD J. LASKI. *Allen & Unwin.* 25*s.*

No nation is more interested in the impression it makes upon foreign observers than the United States; but no nation is more difficult to interpret. De Tocqueville studied a democracy which was young and untroubled by the issues which face a modern industrial society. The commonweath which Lord Bryce described was still, economically and politically, a parvenu whose status in the world his book did something to establish. But in the last two generations the problems of America have become so vast and so complex that even the specialist in, say, politics, literature or economic history has found it hard to keep abreast of his subject. Few observers have the courage or the scholarship to attempt a synthesis on the grand scale. Professor Laski, however, has both, and he has given us a commentary into whose making has gone the research and personal experience of thirty years. He has himself suggested that a great book is, in a sense, "an effort to legislate." The controversy his radical analysis has already provoked in the United States shows that any debate about the future of American democracy must take serious account of his main thesis.

There are fourteen long essays in this book, each of them discussing a major facet of American life. In all these essays, Mr. Laski offers his reader a brilliant survey of the essential facts, whether he is discussing racial discrimination or the role of the churches in American life, the newspaper and the cinema as instruments whereby a ruling class secures conformity to its social ideas, the structure of the educational system or the behaviour of the labour movement. Although the English reader may sometimes be tantalised by a passing reference to an individual or an event of which, lacking wide instruction in American history, he knows little or nothing, he will rightly feel as he turns the final page that his guide has included all the important places in this American pilgrimage. If Professor Laski had merely confined himself to the task of exposition, this would still have been an important book, for access to the material he presents and time to read even part of it are both prerogatives of a fairly small group in this country. But the interpretation dominates the detail, as it should. This has puzzled some pedantic critics across the Atlantic, who have scrutinised the book as if it were a post-graduate monograph, taking Mr. Laski to task for failing to give due weight to the findings of this anthropologist or the opinions of that psycho-cultural economist. But, whether they have done this to display their own erudition or, disliking his socialist critique, to bury his argument under a load of petty quibbles, they have missed the point. It is Professor Laski's hypothesis that matters, and this cannot be destroyed simply by nibbling the edges of his evidence.

This hypothesis is that industrial capitalism has led the United States into the same impasse that Marxists have always insisted would beset capitalist democracies. While American institutions may be democratic in form, they operate to protect a capitalist system of production and the interests of the class which owns and controls that system. Yet the most productive economy on earth cannot offer full employment and social welfare without State aid, whether it is a New Deal in peace or enormous expenditure in war. It pays its formal tribute to the democratic origins of the Republic, but this has increasingly become a ritual incantation to defend it from further social changes. The identification of Jeffersonian democracy and the modern corporation may seem plausible in Harding's normalcy or the Coolidge boom; it was a cruel fraud to the Negro sharecropper, to unions trying to organise the Ford plant and to the college teacher who must use textbooks censored by utility companies. The New Deal, Mr. Laski argues, rescued millions of people at the price of refuting the traditional American belief that as soon as the State ceases to be the night-watchman of property it becomes the enemy of personal liberty and economic security. The New Deal, in fact, was the beginning of the struggle for the positive State; the logic of that social conflict must lead steadily to the planning which alone can channel the vast resources of America into the course of democratic progress. Unless the United States transforms itself into a social-democracy, American capitalism will plunge the country into imperialism overseas and domestic depression, twin evils which might easily destroy the American democracy. With Franklin Roosevelt, Mr. Laski insists that the social philosophy which served in the horse-and-buggy days is inadequate for an age in which decisions taken in Washington can make or break our civilisation.

May we expect those decisions to be fruitful for Americans and the rest of us alike? Only, Mr. Laski believes, if radical democracy can slip a strong harness over the champing horse of American economic power. Only, moreover, if Americans remember that material salvation is not the single goal.

> The importance of Americanism until the end of the Civil War was as a faith, or a principle of faith, which insisted on the elevation and fulfilment of the ordinary man. If it left an undemocratic Europe unconvinced, at least that principle left it profoundly disturbed. But the importance of Americanism to Europe since the end of the Civil War has lain in principles like industrial combination, scientific management, mass production, competitive power. The failure to revitalise Americanism has reduced it from a moral principle to a technological one. It has deprived it of a purpose which achieves in a community a new level of spiritual integration. In its new phase Americanism has transferred the centre of its speculative effort from the issue of what a man is to what a man has.

Now the whole of this analysis raises two questions. Is it valid? The reader must judge for himself, and time will tell. But I think that, apostles of unbridled capitalism and managerial revolutionaries apart, there are few people who would happily undertake to refute the substance of it. There will be more dispute, however, about the second question. Do the practical conclusions follow? An American liberal, for instance, may agree with the diagnosis of his society and reject Mr. Laski's political cure. One assertion certain to arouse a fierce argument is that:

> . . . the United States has reached a stage in its historic development where the objectives of its labour movement are in fact unattainable without the formation of a political party directly concerned with their promotion.

It is no answer to Mr. Laski's case to say that, for the present at least, the Democratic revival makes this unlikely. It is a different matter to suggest that it is a wrong policy, that the United States is different in kind and not merely in degree from other capitalist democracies and that its development will thus diverge from their pattern.

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This concept of American "exceptionalism" still has a powerful appeal. Many Americans will join Mr. Laski in dismissing Turner's frontier thesis as inappropriate to modern conditions or will admit that Professor Selig Perlman's theoretical justification of "business unionism" —personified in Samuel Gompers—is "built on enormous assumptions none of which he has seriously explored." But they will yet balk at agreeing that

> . . . the peculiar complex of qualities we call Americanism is now subject to the same forces as the peculiar complex we call Europeanism. Those forces will have a retarded effect in their American expression, partly because America is so much more vast and wealthy than Europe, so that it is able to withstand crises for a longer period; and partly because these forces have to make their way against the resistance of ideas inherited from an earlier America . . .

They may be right to hesitate. It depends how wide you can stretch Mr. Laski's qualifying "retarded effect." But only the stupid who search for exact parallels in history would so misinterpret Mr. Laski as to think he is not aware of the modifications that the American environment necessarily imposes. His argument, throughout this provocative book, is that not all the regional, political and cultural complications that Americans can conjure up are able to change the essential character of their society. A capitalist clock has a Marxist spring, whatever colour the face is painted.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

GEORGE ELIOT AGAIN

George Eliot. By JOAN BENNETT. *Cambridge.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The George Eliot Mrs. Bennett unveils is not a wholly unfamiliar figure; we have seen parts of it before, and possibly the whole of it dimly from a distance. Hence we feel in reading Mrs. Bennett's book a curious sense of recognition. There have been other, more "original," interpretations of the novelist, but none with this same air of truth and authority.

Mrs. Bennett believes that George Eliot, of all English novelists, has the most to offer the modern reader. Her books are addressed to mature and thoughtful minds, and, unlike most of her contemporaries, she was not "distracted from the contemplation of her subject by the wish to provide the sort of entertainment the reader demanded, nor by the wish to propagate specific views." (She surely wished to influence conduct, though?) George Eliot was a thorough novelist: she explored all the bearings of the situations she invented. True, there are many hortatory digressions, but, Mrs. Bennett reminds us, "these asides are addressed to adults." George Eliot's work is extremely concentrated, so that her novels possess organic form rare in a literature for which serial publication was the norm. Mrs. Bennett discerns in George Eliot's comparative indifference to the amusement of her readers a source of strength which "paradoxically . . . has endowed us with novels even more entertaining and persuasive than those of any other Victorian novelist."

Mrs. Bennett goes on to suggest that there is a particular relevance to the twentieth century in the moral problem which confronted George Eliot: that of preserving in a context of doubt those moral values which had once been closely associated with a religious dogma she repudiated:

> The point of view from which she contemplates the human situation [Mrs. Bennett writes] reveals both her keen appreciation of traditional beliefs and customs, and her own conviction that the substructure of dogma cannot endure; she is, however, in no doubt that the values it formerly sustained can survive it.

This is Mrs. Bennett's way of saying that George Eliot was what Lord David Cecil has called a "conservative revolutionary"—a conservative in ethics, a revolutionary in metaphysics. Whether such a position is logically tenable, we are not invited to question. Mrs. Bennett is more concerned with a different sort of contradiction in the work of George Eliot: one which arises from what she calls a "rift" between George Eliot the artist and George Eliot the scholar.

George Eliot matters most, of course, as the artist, as the author of *Middlemarch* (her best, Mrs. Bennett agrees) and *Felix Holt* and *Silas Marner*. But she was also a philosophical amateur, a bluestocking, the translator of Strauss and Feuerbach and Spinoza. Now, while Mrs. Bennett admits that the scholar enables the artist to be "more fully aware of the complexities of human life than any of her contemporaries," she insists that George Eliot cannot "do her best work when any premeditated intention [intervenes] between her and her direct vision of her subject." The scholar leads the artist, in a phrase George Eliot used herself, to "lapse from the picture to the diagram."

I suspect that Mrs. Bennett is confronted here not with a single problem, but with two—the psychological problem (which concerns any "philosophical" novelist) of how far a creative imagination can co-exist in the same mind with a strong faculty of philosophical cerebration; and a second, more personal problem of whether George Eliot's imaginative picture of life corresponds with her intellectual persuasions. The only fault I have to find with Mrs. Bennett's excellent book is that she has confused these two separate questions, and confusing them makes one or two perplexing statements. She says, for example, on page xii that George Eliot's "rationalism . . . implicitly *controls* her vision of life," and seems flatly to contradict this on page 101 where she says it is only when George Eliot's reflective powers are in due *subordination* to her creative gift" and when "she responds to her characters rather than thinks about them" that the total effect is an increase of understanding and of compassion.

Mrs. Bennett's answer to the first of the problems I have mentioned—did George Eliot's exceptional intellectual activity nourish or exhaust her imaginative power?—seems to be *both*—at different times and in different ways. There I am sure she is right. But where Mrs. Bennett says a positivist philosophy controls even only implicitly, George Eliot's novels, I think she is wrong. As a philosopher-novelist, George Eliot must be called a most illogical positivist, since she was always preoccupied with moral questions that are rendered meaningless by her own philosophy. A reader who did not know, on other information, that George Eliot was a positivist, might reasonably describe the "philosophy" of her novels as a pessimistic sort of Methodism—on such assumptions, in fact, her novels became Sunday reading for our parents. Mrs. Bennett, no doubt correctly, disputes the popular view that "the melancholy of George Eliot's novels is due to her hankering for lost religious faith," but I think there is much to be said for the suggestion that George Eliot, though intellectually a positivist, remained emotionally a species of Methodist. Such a suggestion links up with Mrs. Bennett's theory of the "rift" between the scholar and the artist, and finds support in several of George Eliot's letters. (There is, for example, the letter to Miss Lewis in February, 1842, which is supposed to relate George Eliot's "release from Calvinism," but which ends with the confession that the writer is "ranting after the fashion of one of the Primitive Methodist prophetesses"—as, indeed, she is.)

Mrs. Bennett effectively refutes the notion that George Eliot's illegal union with George Henry

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Lewes caused her to be unusually sensitive to questions of morality. She explains that this liaison, far from disturbing the conscience of the novelist, "marked [her] achievement . . . of emotional equilibrium." It is made quite clear that George Eliot had no sense of guilt about the situation, and was distressed only in so far as her action distressed her friends. She wrote to her old instructor in philosophical scepticism and phrenology, Charles Bray, to say she had taken the step quite deliberately and would accept the consequences without bitterness or irritation. She implied in the same letter that there were no grounds for moral censure, since Lewes had made financial provision for his wife and children. She did not then mention that Lewes's wife was already living adulterously with Thornton Hunt.

The important thing, Mrs. Bennett persuades us, is that George Eliot was happy with Lewes for twenty-six years, and that Lewes gave her advice and encouragement of crucial importance in her first attempts at writing. Difficult as it may nowadays be to regard as a serious literary critic a man who was also a Shakespearean actor, a marine biologist, a medical student, a lecturer on foreign languages and a historian of philosophy, Lewes's intellectual companionship provided precisely that environment in which George Eliot's peculiar genius could most successfully mature. Had Lewes been a more single-minded philosopher, the result for his mistress might well have been to nurture the scholar at the expense of the artist. Having a muddle-headed dilettante for a consort, George Eliot found her creative balance, so that she became (forgetting *Romola*) a better novelist with each new book.

MAURICE CRANSTON

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Dr. Shryock, who is a non-medical professor of American history at the University of Pennsylvania, has obviously set himself a monumental task in attempting the history of the growth of medicine since the seventeenth century, in relation to the concurrent development of social conditions and scientific knowledge. Yet he is right in claiming that this is the only kind of medical history worth writing, for medicine is not a single science but a congerie of sciences, applied with art. Hence the state of medical knowledge at any time is dependent on the progress attained in physics, bio-chemistry, statistical method and a dozen other sciences, while the extent to which the individuals of any country do, in fact, benefit by this knowledge is dependent on social and economic factors of enormous complexity. Not surprisingly, Dr. Shryock's vast subject nearly gets him down. He begins too abruptly with the scientific awakening in the seventeenth century and, perhaps, fails to realise the importance of what went before. An attraction towards sympathetic magic is a permanent element in the human mind and accounts for many puzzling features in medical history, including the perennial popularity of quack medicines. It has still to be reckoned with in planning any medical service. The author does not quite grasp the complicated structure of the English medical services and fails (like many nearer home who should know better) to realise the pitiful inadequacy of the domiciliary medical help available to the British working man before the Lloyd George Insurance Act. But these are minor flaws in an astonishingly erudite and suggestive survey. We are shown how the progress of medical science advances in waves or kangaroo-leaps but never in a steady flow. The "dead" periods, such as occurred at the beginning of the eighteenth century and again at the beginning of the nineteenth, may be explained by factors which still operate, i.e., disappointment of excessive hopes raised by previous discoveries, low standards in the medical profession, or a dangerous trend in the philosophy of the day as in the Romantic period of 1800 to 1830. It is of great significance that the early German nationalist movement produced works showing a poverty of observation, a wealth of speculation and attempts to fit natural phenomena into a meta-physical pattern which are prophetic of the Lysenko attitude to-day.

Dr. Shryock's later chapters give an illuminating and admirably detached account of the present state of American medical services, which ought to be better known than they are to planners and administrators in this country. Unrestricted individualism in a land of unparalleled wealth has produced brilliant achievements in every field of medicine (results, it should be fairly admitted, shared generously with the rest of the world), but the problem of meeting the enormous cost of medical treatment remains insoluble for the ordinary citizen. "Liberal critics of American medicine," says the professor, "are inclined to view it as technically more advanced and socially more backward than that of almost any other country." Opponents of State medical schemes in England should realise that the lay administrators of the great insurance companies have a grip on the doctors in their employ which would excite amazement in Whitehall. The luxurious private clinics and hospitals in which huge sums are invested have hitherto formed an impassible barrier against the provision of an adequate hospital service for the less well-to-do, and the famous Blue Cross voluntary medical insurance scheme gives much less effective coverage than might be supposed. Shryock might have added that even the admirable system of "group practice" by small voluntary groups of general practitioners or specialists has been found liable to great abuse. It is well known that unnecessary procedures and examinations are freely undertaken, and the patient finally staggers home relieved—possibly—of his original complaint, but more certainly of his appendix, his teeth, his tonsils, and his bank balance.

This book would be rather stiff going for the general reader, but it will give students of social science, doctors, and all others interested in medicine, a mass of information and suggestive analyses of historical trends not easily found elsewhere. It is agreeably free from jargon.

LETITIA FAIRFIELD

A NAVAL OCCASION

The Bismarck Episode. By Captain RUSSELL GRENFELL. *Faber.* 12s. 6d.

Captain Grenfell's book tells the story of six days of naval Blind Man's Buff. Those taking part were the *Bismarck* and the *Prinz Eugen* on the German side, and an array of eight battleships and battle cruisers, fifteen cruisers, twenty-one destroyers and two aircraft-carriers on the British side. The book is one of the best on World War II that I have read.

For one thing, it is honestly critical. The author makes no attempt to hide what he considers to be British naval deficiencies, such as the structural defects of the *Hood;* the gunnery failures of the *King George V* and of the *Prince of Wales;* Admiral Holland's tactics in the first phase of the battle; the organisation of the fuelling operations and Captain Vian's dangerous use of his destroyers in an unsuccessful night attack in the later stages of the action. Then there is the unhappy attack by *Ark Royal's* torpedo planes on the British cruiser *Sheffield*, and the

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burst of firing from the *Rodney's* guns at *Ark Royal's* planes.

This book, unlike most war books, has to cover no more than six days of action. The author therefore can, and does give a balanced, detailed, tactical and strategic account of this vital phase in the Battle of the Atlantic. There are omissions. Before calling them sins of omission one would need to know how much time, information and space Captain Grenfell had available to him. However, one might have expected more information about the *Prinz Eugen's* escape tactics, about the *Bismarck's* supply ships and about the Luftwaffe situation. Why did not Goering's squadrons play a greater role? Where were his devastating four-engined Condors which the author mentions early in the book? Where were the German crack torpedo bomber units in the final forty-eight hours of the battle?

Captain Grenfell's treatment provides the naval reader with all the technical details he needs; to the layman he gives a fine sea story, mounting in excitement and never lacking suspense. One loses a sense of direction here and there, I think, but surely no more than did the commanders of the British ships engaged in the battle. The book offers material for a first-class film, a cousin for the American *Fighting Lady* or a sister for the British *In Which We Serve*. There are drama, suspense, reversals of fortune, contrasting colour opportunities for the camera in Whitehall, Iceland, Norway, Berlin and over three thousand miles of chase through varied seascapes. There are roles for every male British film star imaginable. There were, after all, over forty British naval commanders in the original caste. And for the script writer there are humour, pathos and long, portentous silences.

It is perhaps regrettable that in his last chapter, Captain Grenfell raises strategic issues irrelevant to his story. He poses the question of the relative importances of the Battle of the Atlantic and the Battle of Britain. Surely neither he nor Lord Trenchard, whose view he counters, can ever justify their theories. The two battles are simply not comparable. The loss of either would have been disastrous but in any case it is likely that we would have carried on from the Commonwealth, and the New World would have brought its guns to bear to redress the balance of the old. And it is a pity that such a keen mind as Captain Grenfell joins in yet another Navy-versus-Air Force duel at a time when fusion between the Services should be the keynote of military writing. These ubiquitous inter-Service bickerings have marred too many of the war books published during the last few years.

The Bismarck Episode has, however, a lesson for all three Services. It is this. In war it is almost impossible while an action is being fought to assess accurately enemy damage, losses and casualties. It is a great pity that the public, the politicians and the Service Chiefs insist on immediate estimates which are bound to be misleading and are often more damaging in the long run to oneself than to the enemy. The Royal Navy in World War II were most cautious and conservative in their estimates of enemy damage and losses. The Royal Air Force could, with profit, take a leaf from the Navy's book in this respect.

ASHER LEE

HOW NOT TO DO IT

British Trade Unions. By M. TURNER-SAMUELS. Living in Britain Series. *Sampson Low.* 7s. 6d.

This book calls for notice on account of its quite astonishing inaccuracy. Its opening sentence contains a howler, and it proceeds from one misstatement to another at an average rate of almost a howler every few pages. The Trade Union Act was not passed in 1870; Chartism was not "essentially a Socialist movement, inspired by Robert Owen"; the Act of 1927 did not provide explicitly that a sympathetic strike was to be illegal; Stanley Baldwin was not Minister of Labour in 1927 or at any time; Alexander Campbell was not a miner, nor did he convene the Leeds Miners' Conference of 1863; Ernest Bevin did not draw up the T.U.C. Constitution; not three, but ten Lib.-Labs. were elected in 1900, and not seven Labour M.P.s, but two; the T.U.C.'s writ does run in Scotland, despite the existence of a separate Scottish T.U.C.; the Trade Group structure of the Transport and General Workers' Union is peculiar to that Union, and is not a common feature of internal trade union organisation; Trades Councils did not begin about 1846, nor are they prohibited from taking part in municipal elections; the T.U.C. did not officially separate from the L.R.C. in 1903; the International Federation of Trade Unions did not "expire with the end of World War I"; the Industrial Courts Act of 1919 did not "enable the Minister of Labour to set its machinery going" without the consent of the parties, except under Part II, which deals only with Courts of Inquiry; Francis Place, Samuel Bamford and Thomas Hardy were not the leaders of the trade union revival after 1815; Lord Shaftesbury did not begin his life "miserably poor"; the Ten Hours Act was passed in 1847; Workmen's Compensation did not begin in the present century; H. M. Hyndman did not owe his inspiration to Sidney Webb and Bernard Shaw; the first Labour Government did not take office in 1923; it is not the case that "the right of workers to combine with the object of withholding their labour was not conceded until 1875." This is a random selection of howlers, following mainly the order in which they appear in the book; from which it can be inferred that logical arrangement is not among the author's virtues. Mr. Derek Walker-Smith commends Mr. Turner-Samuels's work in an editorial preface, in which he affirms the goodwill of the Conservative Party towards the Trade Unions, but foreshadows a Conservative attempt to amend the Trade Union Act of 1946 by reintroducing "contracting-in." Well, well.

G. D. H. COLE

Picasso, Blue and Pink Periods. Introduction by DENYS SUTTON. *Lindsay Drummond/Editions du Chêne.* 25s.

Sentiment glides easily into sentimentality.—Thus many of the works of Picasso's blue and pink periods fall from the grace of a touching sentimental realism into an odiously sticky and emaciated mannerism. Somehow the most offensive examples seem to get reproduced most often—Gertrude Stein especially showed an uncanny knack for picking all the wrong ones. This album is therefore very welcome, for all except three of the seventeen pictures reproduced are good ones, and those three (plates II, VII, XIV) are justifiably included because they are representative. Furthermore, the standard of colour reproduction is unusually high. The album begins with a portrait showing distinctly the transition from the Toulouse-Lautrec to the blue period, while near the end (plate XII) is to be found a nude marking the transition from the pink to the so-called "negro" period. (It combines the poetry of the one with the sculpturesque qualities of the other and is more vividly alive than either.) Between the extremes are not only such familiar works as *L'Etreinte* and *Jeune Fille à la Corbeille* but some enchanting surprises—a post-impressionist street (plate III), a deliberate echo of Manet (plate V) and—of all things—the still life which Pasmore once tried for so long to bring off (plate X). The introduction tends to be rhetorical and inflated, but its purely historical passages are accurate and clear.

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